



# The Rhetoric of PIETAS: The Pastoral Epistles and Claims to Piety in the Roman Empire

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*The Rhetoric of PIETAS:*  
*The Pastoral Epistles and Claims to Piety in the Roman Empire*

A dissertation presented  
by  
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to  
The Faculty of Harvard Divinity School  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Theology  
In the Subject of  
New Testament and Early Christianity

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The Rhetoric of *PIETAS*: The Pastoral Epistles and Claims to Piety in the Roman Empire**Abstract**

This dissertation reads the Pastoral Epistles alongside imperial propaganda, monumental inscriptions, and philosophical writings of the Roman period to determine how claims to piety (Greek: εὐσέβεια, Latin: *pietas*) advanced socio-political aims and reinforced cultural values and ideological assumptions among its audiences. Coins celebrating the *pietas* of the imperial households of Trajan and Hadrian, the honorary inscription of Salutaris in Ephesus, and the writings of Philo and Plutarch evidence that appeals to piety functioned rhetorically to naturalize hierarchies of power and social orders, recognize the honorable status of citizens, signal expertise in knowledge about the divine, and delineate insiders from outsiders. Moreover, the prevalence of appeals to piety indicates the virtue's broad cultural currency and prestige, which was traded upon for legitimating authority. This dissertation argues that the author of the Pastorals strategically deploys piety in his attempt to negotiate an imperial situation marked by prejudicial perceptions of Christians as a foreign and seditious *superstitio*, to reinforce (gendered) social values, to intervene in Christian debates over the status and authority of benefactors in the *ekklēsia*, to build confidence in and solidarity around the legitimacy of his vision of the ideal *ekklēsia*, and to denigrate the beliefs and practices of rival teachers.

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## Introduction

### *The Politics of Piety in the Pastoral Epistles*

What was the significance of the admonitions made in the letters to Timothy and Titus that followers of Christ Jesus are to be “pious”? These epistles, collectively known as Pastoral Epistles, present piety (εὐσέβεια) as comprising a way of life (1 Tim 2:2; 4:7; 2 Tim 3:12; Titus 2:12) that accords with proper “instruction” (1 Tim 6:3) and the “truth” (Titus 1:1). The contents of this truth are described as the “mystery of piety” (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον), which is expressed by what many scholars have identified as a creed or hymn celebrating the incarnation and vindication of Christ (1 Tim 3:16).<sup>1</sup> The correct instruction of piety stands in stark contrast to the “profane myths and old wives’ tales” (1 Tim 4:7) spread by sophistic teachers whose lust for wealth taints their vain attempt to be pious (1 Tim 6:5; 2 Tim 3:5). And, finally, piety is invoked in the exhortation to care for one’s elderly relatives lest the church become overburdened in its provisions for the poor and widowed (1 Tim 5:4).

So why all this attention to piety? On the surface, this might come across as a rather banal question for those who assume piety is a virtue generally claimed by Christians to describe their devotion to God. Once we understand, however, that within ancient Greco-Roman society piety is political, the topic gains a new interest. Unlike modern discourse, which distinguishes the domain of “religion” from the

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<sup>1</sup> See William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46 (Nashville: Nelson, 1999), 215.

political sphere, appeals to the virtue of piety appeared in diverse contexts in the Greco-Roman world.<sup>2</sup> If modern interpreters are to appreciate the rhetorical significance of piety in the Pastoral Epistles, then these letters must be re-contextualized among the discourses of piety that pervaded the political, civic, and philosophical domains of the Roman Empire. That will be the task of this investigation. In this study, I will demonstrate how within various cultural domains of the Roman Empire, claims to piety furthered a number of social and political aims.

I begin with some preliminary remarks about the authorship, dating, and provenance of the Pastoral Epistles, and then turn to a review of scholarship on the topic. The introduction will conclude with a statement about my framework of analysis and methodology before turning toward the following chapters to discuss the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety within its broader Greco-Roman context.

## HISTORY OF MODERN SCHOLARSHIP

The majority of New Testament scholars agree that 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus were composed by an anonymous author writing in the name of Paul sometime at the end of the first or at the beginning of the second century C.E.<sup>3</sup> These

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<sup>2</sup> On the history of the term "religion," its development during the European reformation and colonial experience, and its problematic construction as a "natural" or "universal" phenomena detached from politics, see William Arnal and Russell T. McCutcheon, *The Sacred is the Profane: The Political Nature of "Religion"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> For a recent overview on the scholastic discourse surrounding the pseudepigraphy of the Pastoral Epistles and cogent arguments in its favor, see Korinna Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God: A Contextual Approach to Roles and Ministries in the Pastoral Epistles* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 2–10; see also Raymond F. Collins, *Letters That Paul Did Not Write: The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Pauline Pseudepigrapha* (Wilmington, DE: Glazer, 1988), 88–131. It should be noted that Jens Herzer has forcefully argued that the thematic prevalence and distinctive use of εὐσεβεία in 1 Timothy suggest that this text has been written by a different pseudepigrapher, writing in the early



epistles are addressed to two of Paul's co-workers, Timothy (1 and 2 Tim.) and Titus (Titus), who are described as serving as Paul's delegates to the Christian communities in Ephesus and Crete, respectively. Scholars often treat these three epistles as a collection since they share many distinctive topics and terms not found in other epistles attributed to Paul. Piety, or in Greek, εὐσέβεια and its word-group (i.e., εὐσεβέω, εὐσεβής, εὐσεβῶς),<sup>4</sup> is one of these thematic terms in the Pastoral Epistles not otherwise found in the seven uncontested epistles of Paul.<sup>5</sup> In Paul's letters to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians, for example, Paul describes life in Christ as rendering one "justified,"<sup>6</sup> "sanctified,"<sup>7</sup> "saved,"<sup>8</sup> "holy,"<sup>9</sup> but never

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to mid-second century C.E. who was literarily dependent upon 2 Timothy and Titus. Herzer's theory holds much explanatory power in accounting for the prevalence of particular tropes within 1 Timothy absent from either 2 Timothy and Titus (e.g., the *ekklēsia* as a "household") and why 1 Timothy and Titus overlap on themes regarding the qualifications for leadership within the *ekklēsia*. See Jens Herzer, "Das Geheimnis der Frömmigkeit' (1 Tim 3,16): Sprache und Stil der Pastoralbriefe in Kontext hellenistisch-römischer Popularphilosophie – eine methodische Problemzeige," *TQ* 187 (2007): 309–29; see also Herzer, "Abschied vom Konsens? Die Pseudepigraphie der Pastoralbriefe als Herausforderung an die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft," *TLZ* 129 (2004), 1268–82; *ibid.*, "Rearranging the 'House of God': A New Perspective on the Pastoral Epistles," in *Empsychoi Logoi—Religious Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst*, ed. Alberdina Houtman, Albert de Jong, and Magdalena Wilhelmina Misset-van de Weg (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 547–66. However, I have not yet been convinced enough to orient this dissertation around his provocative proposal. Whether or not the same pseudepigrapher is responsible for all of the Pastoral Epistles, the essentials of my argument remain intact.

<sup>4</sup> The NRSV renders this term and its cognates as "godliness" or even "religion." The inconsistency of how the same word-group is translated in the Pastoral Epistles has led English readers to miss how dominant a theme this term is for the author of the Pastoral Epistles' representation of the ideal *ekklēsia*. Frederick W. Danker's revision of Walter Bauer's lexicon provides a fuller range of "reverence," "loyalty," and especially "piety" ("εὐσέβεια, εὐσεβέω, εὐσεβής, εὐσεβῶς," *BDAG* 412–13).

<sup>5</sup> It is the consensus among New Testament scholars that Paul is a source for at least seven of the canonical epistles ascribed to him: 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, and Romans. For an overview of Paul's letters and scholastic suggestions about its formation, see Richard I. Pervo, *The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 23–61.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Rom. 3:24, 26; 5:1, 9; 8:30; 1 Cor. 6:11; Gal. 2:16–17; Gal. 3:24.

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Rom 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11.

“pious.” In fact, many commentators consider the Pastoral Epistles’ sudden use of piety as key evidence that these letters were not written by Paul. Outside of the thirteen occurrences of piety in the Pastorals,<sup>10</sup> this virtue only appears four times in Acts<sup>11</sup> and five times in 2 Peter.<sup>12</sup> Within the Pastoral Epistles, εὐσέβεια serves as a leitmotif in the author’s admonitions for the Christian assembly (*ekklēsia*),<sup>13</sup> to organize itself around correct doctrine and behavior.

New Testament scholars have recognized this distinctive emphasis on piety, but have not accounted sufficiently for how contemporary discourses on piety, which operated in Greco-Roman civic life and literature, illuminate the Pastoral Epistles’ own rhetorical use of piety. Those scholars who have addressed the presence of piety within the Pastoral Epistles have been concerned with the *meaning* of this virtue. Their discussions have focused on identifying the cultural backgrounds that influenced the Pastoral Epistles’ use of piety and how the Pastoral Epistles have redefined the term in contrast to its “secular” usage. For example,

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<sup>8</sup> E.g., Rom 5:9–10; 10:9–10; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15;

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Rom 11:16; 12:1; 1 Cor. 3:17; 6:19.

<sup>10</sup> See 1 Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 5:4; 6:3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim 3:5, 12; Tit 1:1; 2:12. There are fourteen occurrences if you include θεοσέβεια in 1 Tim 2:10. θεοσέβεια and εὐσέβεια are also conceptually paralleled in Philo, *Opif.* 155.

<sup>11</sup> Acts 3:12; 10:2, 7; 17:23

<sup>12</sup> 2 Pet 1:3, 6–7; 2:9; 3:11.

<sup>13</sup> Throughout this dissertation, I use the term *ekklēsia* rather than “Christian assembly” or “church” in order to signal how Christian gatherings were conceived as being *political* spaces, not just *religious* spaces, as well as to distinguish ancient gatherings of early Christians from modern understandings of the “Christian church.” During the late first century and early second century, what precisely constituted the organization, practices, and beliefs the *ekklēsia* was under debate. The Pastoral Epistles’ own polemical presentation of what the ideal *ekklēsia* should look like evidences the lively contention around this issue. Cf. the use of *ekklēsia* by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza in *The Power of the Word: Scripture and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 10.

Werner Foerster has argued that εὐσέβεια retains its Greek meaning in the Pastorals and so denotes a manner of life that respects the divinely created orders of life.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, John J. Wainwright has contended that εὐσέβεια encapsulates the Christian life, in which not only the manner of life, but also belief is centered in Christ.<sup>15</sup>

Interest in the prevalence of piety in the Pastoral Epistles has also tended to gravitate around questions concerning whether the Pastoral Epistles were composed by an author writing in Paul's name<sup>16</sup> or whether the church had accommodated to Greco-Roman culture.<sup>17</sup> The centripetal force of these issues is

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<sup>14</sup> Werner Foerster, "Εὐσέβεια in den Pastoralbriefen," *NTS* 5 (1959): 213–18; idem, "εὐσεβής, εὐσέβεια, εὐσεβέω," *TDNT* 7.182–84.

<sup>15</sup> John J. Wainwright, "Eusebeia: Syncretism or Conservative Contextualization," *EvQ* 65 (1993): 211–224, esp. 223.

<sup>16</sup> Since the publication of Friedrich Schleiermacher's work on 1 Timothy, scholars have considered the presence of εὐσέβεια along with many other distinct phrases and terminology as evidence that these letters were written by another author writing in the name of Paul. See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Über den sogenannten ersten Brief des Paulus an den Timotheos* (Berlin: In der Realschulbuchhandlung, 1807). Scholars who would soon advance Schleiermacher's proposal include, Johann G. Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Leipzig: Weidmannischen Buchhandlung, 1812); Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Die sogenannten Pastoralbriefe des Apostels Paulus* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1835); and Heinrich J. Holtzmann, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1880). For a helpful overview of linguistic statistical analyses of the Pastoral Epistles, see Kenneth J. Neumann, *The Authenticity of the Pauline Epistles in the Light of Stylostatistical Analysis*, SBLDS 120 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990) esp. 23–114. For a concise summary of conceptual differences in how the Pastoral Epistles and "genuine" Pauline texts use the same word, see Stanley E. Porter, "Pauline Authorship and the Pastoral Epistles: Implications for Canon," *BBR* 5 (1995): 105–123; esp. 111–12.

<sup>17</sup> For example, see the following conclusion of Lilian Portefaix in "'Good Citizenship' in the Household of God: Women's Position in the Pastorals Reconsidered in the Light of Roman Rule," in *A Feminist Companion to the Deutero-Pauline Epistles*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 147–58: "From the Pastoral Epistles, seen in the context of Roman rule...not only women but also slaves and leaders of the church on various levels were encouraged to adapt themselves to the social pattern of Roman society in order to escape persecution. In order to appease the Roman authorities the leaders were told to take on the virtues expected of military commanders and to fulfill the duties of a paterfamilias in order to enjoy public confidence in the eyes of non-Christians" (p. 157). See also, Lone Fatum, "Christ Domesticated: The Household Theology of the Pastorals as Political Strategy," *The Formation of the Early Church*, ed. Jostein Ådna (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 175–207. Scholars who are concerned to undercut interpretations of the Pastorals Epistles as accommodating

understandable, since answers to these questions have great consequences for the kinds of stories these scholars tell about the development of the early church. For example, are the Pastoral Epistles in continuity with a trajectory of (proto)orthodoxy and an extension of the historical Paul's theology and vision for the *ekklēsia*?<sup>18</sup> Or were they composed by a disquieted leader who appropriated Paul's voice in order to correct an eschatological and egalitarian interpretation of the apostle's teaching and legitimate an ethical vision more in line with societal norms?<sup>19</sup> These are only two examples along a spectrum of historical reconstructions, yet they represent the kind of stories numerous biblical scholars develop as they reconstruct the historical situation behind the Pastoral Epistles. For many contemporary Christians, what is at stake behind these stories is whether the Pastoral Epistles legitimately represent the "voice" of Paul and, thus, can be trusted as authoritative texts for ordering contemporary Christian practices—for example, regarding the permissibility of women to teach in church (1 Tim. 2:12). At stake too for some modern Christians are the reliability of "orthodox" notions about the integrity of Christian Scripture and "the Church." In these cases, considering these works as pseudepigraphal can be perceived as incongruent with the truth and

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or capitulating to societal pressures, see Philip H. Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles*, JSNTSup 34 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989); Wainwright, "Eusebeia"; Reggie M. Kidd, *Wealth and Beneficence in the Pastoral Epistles: A "Bourgeois" From of Early Christianity?* SBLDS 122 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990); Benjamin Witherington, III, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy and 1–3 John*, vol. 1 of *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), esp. 150.

<sup>18</sup> See the notable studies of Towner, *Goal of Our Instruction*; Kidd, *Wealth and Beneficence*.

<sup>19</sup> The commentary of Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann is paradigmatic of this position; see *The Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Helmut Koester, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 39–41. On Dibelius and Conzelmann's argument and its influence, see my discussion below, as well as Towner's extensive references, *Goal of Our Instruction*, 259 n.2.

integrity of scripture. Conclusions about the presence of texts authored under false pretenses within the canon or stories about the development of the church that stress diversity and difference over against a single trajectory of orthodox harmony can also be theologically problematic.

Let us now turn to a more detailed discussion of the history of scholarship on εὐσέβεια in the Pastoral Epistles in order to situate the kinds of interventions this study aims to contribute.

### **Martin Dibelius, Hans Conzelmann, and Werner Foerster**

Most twentieth-century scholarship on piety in the Pastoral Epistles is conversant with the influential suggestions of Martin Dibelius, Hans Conzelmann, and Werner Foerster.<sup>20</sup> Martin Dibelius, along with Hans Conzelmann, who would be asked to revise Dibelius's commentary for two more editions after Dibelius's death in 1947, suggested that the Pastoral Epistles' use of εὐσέβεια was derived from the discourse of civic morality, with piety illustrating "the ideal of good, honorable citizenship."<sup>21</sup> This meaning of εὐσέβεια is demonstrated from passages that emphasize piety as an appropriate response to imperial power (1 Tim 2:2) and filial duty (1 Tim 5:4), and that list piety alongside other Greek virtues (Titus 2:12). The Pastoral Epistles' appropriation of piety is indicative of the author's attempt to Christianize or give "new motivation by Christian ideas" to popular morality and

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<sup>20</sup> Cp. the helpful overviews of the history of interpretation given by Wainwright, "Eusebeia," 211–224; I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, ICC (London: T&T Clark, 1999), 135–44; Angela Standhartinger, "Eusebeia in den Pastoralbriefen Ein Beitrag zum Einfluss römischen Denkens auf das Entstehende Christentum," *NovT* 48 (2006): 51–82, esp. 52–54.

<sup>21</sup> Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 39–41. For Dibelius's first edition, see, *Die Briefe des Apostels Paulus : an Timotheus I, II, an Titus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1913).

family ethics.<sup>22</sup> With the delay of the *parousia* (the coming of Jesus), the author writing in the name of Paul constructs an “ideal of Christian citizenship” (*Ideal christlicher Bürgerlichkeit*)<sup>23</sup> in order to build toward a peaceful life within this world.<sup>24</sup> According to Dibelius, the beleaguered apostle Paul, in contrast to the “Paul” of the Pastorals, did not share this hope, since his eschatological “citizenship” lay beyond this present world of tribulation.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, perhaps in order to keep this “handbook” commentary brief, neither Dibelius nor Conzelmann elaborated much further about the content and significance of εὐσέβεια within its Greco-Roman milieu beyond a few references.<sup>26</sup> This work would be carried out in

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<sup>22</sup> Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 39–41, esp. 40.

<sup>23</sup> Dibelius’s concept of “*Bürgerlichkeit*” and its English translation as “citizenship” have drawn much scholarly attention. Kidd has observed that Dibelius never explicitly defines what he means by “*Bürgerlichkeit*” (*Wealth and Beneficence*, 11). Looking to Dibelius’s other works for clarification, Kidd deduces that Dibelius’s “*Bürgerlichkeit*” serves to designate the Pastoral Epistles’ ethics as socially ascendant, culturally accommodative, and unheroically conservative (ibid., 9–25). “*Bürgerlichkeit*” has also been taken to mean “bourgeoise” or “middle-class” (Spicq, *Les Épîtres* 1.292 n.3). However, as Zamfir has rightly observed, Dibelius’s concept of “*Bürgerlichkeit*” comes close to Spicq’s own description of the ideal Christian life that the Pastorals envision, namely: “the perfectly honest man, the καλὸς καγαθός, a man aspiring to the Greek ideal of humanity” (Zamfir, *Men and Women*, 15; see Spicq, *Les Épîtres*, 1.227). Translating *Bürgerlichkeit* as “citizenship” presents further complications as it can lead readers to “upload” concepts of “citizenship” tied to the modern nation state. The legal, political, and social status of persons in the geographical areas encompassed by the first-century Roman Empire is complex and shifting (see e.g., A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973). There is no indication that the inscribed audience of the Pastoral Epistles were represented as Roman citizens rather than as subjects with a range of legal rights and obligations. In this dissertation “citizenship” refers generally to a discourse of the character and obligations associated with public respectability, determined by ethnicity, gender, wealth, and status as slave, free, or freed person. The exceptions are the clearly marked occasions when I refer to Dibelius’s concept of *Bürgerlichkeit*.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>26</sup> Dibelius and Conzelmann do note that piety can be found among other Greek virtues (e.g., ἀρετή, δικαιοσύνη, καλοκάγαθία) in honorary inscriptions (ibid., 39). In the English edition, Conzelmann directs readers’ attention to Ceslas Spicq’s argument that the Roman concept of *pietas* has influenced the author of the Pastoral Epistles. He also references Theodor Ulrich’s history of piety within the

Werner Foerster's entry on εὐσέβεια in the *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*.<sup>27</sup>

According to Foerster, εὐσέβεια in the Pastoral Epistles denoted a godly way of life that upheld the natural orders of domestic, social, and political life, which were now believed to be grounded in the will of "God our Savior" (1 Tim 2:3).<sup>28</sup> This meaning of εὐσέβεια follows in line with its use in classical Hellenism, in which εὐσέβεια "expresses 'respect' for the orders of domestic, national, and also international life."<sup>29</sup> Like Dibelius and Conzelmann, Foerster described the author's "civil" expression of piety (e.g., 1 Tim 2:2) as functioning to win the respect of outsiders and to counteract rival teachings that regarded imperial authority and the

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Roman state and the theological dictionary entries and articles of Friedrich Hauck and Werner Foerster (ibid., 40 n.29).

<sup>27</sup> Foerster's entry first appeared in Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1935); which was later translated by Geoffrey W. Bromily in the English translation of the dictionary, *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (TDNT).

<sup>28</sup> Foerster, "Eusebeia," 215–218; idem, TDNT 7.184. In contrast to my own argument, Foerster suggests that εὐσέβεια was "not a central and indispensable concept in the Pastorals," since it is absent among a list of virtues found within 2 Tim 2:22 where it should have been if it was important (cf. 1 Tim 6:11) (TDNT 7.182).

<sup>29</sup> Foerster, TDNT 7.175–85, esp. 176. Foerster (TDNT 7.176) justifies his definition of the classical Greek meaning of piety on the basis of its use by Antiphon, Demosthenes, Euripides, Plato, and Sophocles to denote reverence directed toward: the dead (Sophocles, *El.* 464; *Ant.* 943) and their customs (Euripides, *Hel.* 1277); parents and siblings (Plato, *Resp.* 10.615C; Sophocles, *Oed. tyr.* 1431; see also Dio Chrysostom, *In. cont.* 5.4); rulers (Sophocles, *Aj.* 1350), judges (Antiphon, *Or.* V. 96); aliens and refugees (Euripides, *Alc.* 1148), the good (Sophocles, *Ant.* 731), oaths (Euripides, *Hipp.* 656; Plato, *Apol.* 35C; Demosthenes, *Or.* 9.16), and the law (Demosthenes, *Or.* 19.22); and even a philosophical way of life (Plato, *Ep.* 311D–E). Foerster proceeds to document how in the Greco-Roman period, εὐσέβεια tends to signify both an reverent attitude as well as proper ritual conduct before the gods more than a respect for the orders of life, as exemplified in Epictetus (*Diatr.* 1.27.14; *Ench.* 31) and Plutarch (*Superst.* 166D–E; 167E; 170D–E) (TDNT 7.177). Foerster also catalogues the use of this virtue within Hellenistic Jewish literature, including the Septuagint, Aristeas, 1 Enoch, Josephus, and Philo (see TDNT 7.179–81).

family with contempt.<sup>30</sup> Despite his lack of sensitivity toward the rhetorical nature of the Pastorals' construction of its opponents, Foerster, for the most part, correctly identified two of the essential functions of the Pastorals' rhetoric of piety, which I will describe as an attempt to address the concerns of outsiders and to demarcate boundaries between insiders and outsiders. Furthermore, Dibelius, Conzelmann, and Foerster broke important ground in directing scholars' attention toward the meaning and significance of the Pastoral Epistles' use of εὐσέβεια, especially in relation to its Greco-Roman and Jewish contexts. However, later commentators would critique their approach for lacking sensitivity to the theological dimension of the author's use of this Greek ideal.

### **A Theological Synthesis of the Greco-Roman and Jewish Literature**

Whereas Dibelius, Conzelmann, and Foerster emphasized the singular meaning of piety as a civic virtue that reinscribed social order, Ceslas Spicq explored the diverse meanings of εὐσέβεια operative throughout the Pastoral Epistles.<sup>31</sup> According to Spicq, piety denotes: a humble devotion to the divine, a way of life consistent with the teachings of Christ, a kind of knowledge, a dynamic virtue fitting with civic morality, a disposition that earns a reward, a loyalty to family, and that which secures divine benevolence and protection.<sup>32</sup>

Spicq's most important contribution to my study lies within his

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>31</sup> Ceslas Spicq, *Saint Paul: Les Épîtres pastorales*, vol. 1, *EBib* (Paris: Gabalda, 1969), 482–92.

<sup>32</sup> Spicq, *Épîtres pastorales*, 1.482–92.



comprehensive catalogue of cultural analogues among Greek, Roman, and Jewish sources that resonate with the diverse meanings of piety within the Pastoral Epistles. For example, Spicq discusses how the author's association of piety with correct instruction and teaching (e.g., 1 Tim 5:4; 6:3; Titus 1:1; 2:12) treats piety as a kind of "knowledge" (ἐπιστήμη) in a manner similar to a number of ancient Mediterranean sources, including the Greek biographer Diogenes Laertius, the Roman Senator Cicero, Jewish Intellectual Philo of Alexandria, 4 Maccabees, and the Corpus Hermeticum.<sup>33</sup> The Pastoral Epistles share with these texts the assumption that one must have a correct understanding of the divine in order to possess εὐσέβεια. Additionally, Spicq is one of the earliest commentators to draw attention to the resonances between the author's use of εὐσέβεια in 1 Tim 5:4, which admonishes children to demonstrate filial piety toward their parents and grandparents, and the Roman virtue of filial *pietas*.<sup>34</sup> Although Spicq provides a treasure trove of references that parallel the Pastoral Epistles' use of piety, he stops short of contextualizing these sources and considering the significance and socio-political function of the Pastorals' engagement with these analogous uses of piety within its Greco-Roman milieu.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 487. For example, Spicq cites Diogenes Laertius, 7.1.119: "piety is the knowledge of how to serve the Gods" (εἶναί τε τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἐπιστήμην θεῶν θεραπέιας); he also references, Cicero, *Nat. d.* 2.153; Philo, *Mut.* 76; 4 Macc. 7.4, 16, 18, 24; 13.1, 26; 16.4, 18; *Corp. herm.* 6.5; 10.9; esp. 9.4 which defines piety as "the knowledge of God" (εὐσέβεια δέ ἐστι θεοῦ γνῶσις).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 489–90.

<sup>35</sup> For a classic critique on the method of "parallelomania," which appropriately Spicq's treatment of εὐσέβεια, see Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 1–13. See also, L. Michael White and John T. Fitzgerald, "Quod est comparandum: The Problem of Parallels," in *Early Christianity and Classical Culture: Comparative Studies in Honor of A. J. Malherbe*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and L. Michael White, *NovTSup* 60 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 13–39.

Over the course of the second-half of the twentieth century, New Testament scholars continued to debate the precise meaning and Christianization of εὐσέβεια. Notable scholars include Norbert Brox, Hermann von Lips, and Jürgen Roloff.<sup>36</sup> While each critiqued Dibelius, Conzelmann, and Foerster for not adequately addressing how the Pastoral Epistles' theology informed its conception of εὐσέβεια, they also treated the Greek ethical understanding of εὐσέβεια as the primary influence upon the Pastoral Epistles. For example, according to Brox, Foerster failed to appreciate how the well-ordered life marked by εὐσέβεια follows from the belief and devotion of the Christian.<sup>37</sup> Hermann von Lips added that Foerster's emphasis upon εὐσέβεια as a way of life does not account for the occasions when εὐσέβεια denotes a knowledge about the divine (e.g., 1 Tim 3:16; 6:3; Titus 1:1; cp. 1 Tim 3:9) in a manner similar to its use within the popular philosophical tradition.<sup>38</sup> Following Brox and von Lips, Jürgen Roloff concluded that Christian εὐσέβεια came to denote an outward manifestation or behavior that results from the life of faith (e.g., 1 Tim 2:2; 4:7–8; 2 Tim 3:12).<sup>39</sup> Thus for these scholars, εὐσέβεια in the Pastorals

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<sup>36</sup> Other notable works include, Lorenz Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe I. Erster Timotheusbrief*, HThKNT XI/1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1994), 68–69; Marius Reiser, "Bürgerliches Christentum in den Pastoralbriefen?," *Bib* 74 (1993):27–44.

<sup>37</sup> Norbert Brox, *Die Pastoralbriefe: 1 Timotheus, 2 Timotheus, Titus* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1969), 174–77.

<sup>38</sup> Hermann von Lips, *Glaube, Gemeinde, Amt. Zum Verständnis der Ordination in den Pastoralbriefen*, FRLANT 122 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1979), 80–87. Von Lips lists numerous references that describe piety as a form of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) ranging from Sextus Empiricus to Pseudo-Plato (p. 82). See also Ch. 5.

<sup>39</sup> Jürgen Roloff, *Der Erste Brief an Timotheus*, EKK XV (Zürich: Benzinger, 1988), 117–19. According to Roloff, εὐσέβεια in the Pastoral Epistles is about living "a life visibly framed by the grace of God in all its implications" (*von der Gnade Gottes sichtbar gestaltetes Leben in allen seinen Bezügen*, emphasis original, p. 118).

constitutes a *reverent* lifestyle, more than it does a *respectable* lifestyle. That is to say, Christian εὐσέβεια is less concerned with the gaze of outsiders than it is with that of God. While each of these authors provides important correctives to the narrow definition of εὐσέβεια provided by Dibelius, Conzelmann, and Foerster, their studies nevertheless employ the same limited methodology that treats parallel uses of εὐσέβεια as background material for interpreting the term's meaning in the Pastoral Epistles.

### Hellenistic Judaism: The *locus* of Theological Piety

Although Foerster and Spicq had already culled numerous references to εὐσέβεια from Jewish literature ranging from the Septuagint, to 4 Maccabees, Philo, and Josephus, Jerome Quinn's argument that Hellenistic Jewish literature provides an essential background for understanding the Pastoral Epistles' own use of εὐσέβεια would prove influential.<sup>40</sup> Within the writings of the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, the εὐσεβ- word group occurs ninety-six times—the bulk of which within the Maccabean literature, especially 4 Maccabees, where it occurs sixty times.<sup>41</sup> On the few occasions εὐσέβεια translates texts originally written in Hebrew, it translates the Hebrew צדיקים, “the righteous” (Prov 12:12; Isa 24.16; 26:7), יראת יהוה, “fear of the Lord” (e.g., Prov 1:7; Isa 11:2; 33:6),

<sup>40</sup> Jerome D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, ABD (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 282–90.

<sup>41</sup> Ps 13:5; Prov 1:7; 12:12; 13:11, 19; Isa 11:2; 24:16; 26:7; 32:8; 33:6; Jdt 8.31; Wis 10.12; Sir 11.17, 22; 12.2, 4; 13.17; 16.13; 23.12; 27.11, 29; 28.22; 33.14, 37.12; 39.27; 43.33; 49.3; Sus 63.2; 1 Esd 1.21; 2 Macc 1.19; 3.1; 12.45; 3 Macc. 2.31–32; 4 Macc 1.1; 5:18, 24, 31, 38; 6:2, 22, 31; 7.1, 4, 16, 18; 8.1; 9.6–7, 24, 29–30; 10.15; 11.5, 20–1, 23; 12.11, 14; 13.1, 7–8, 10, 12, 26–27; 14.3, 6–7; 15.1–2, 12, 14, 17, 23, 29, 32; 16.1, 4, 13–14, 17, 23; 17.5, 7, 22; 18.1, 3.

וְנָדִיב, “the noble” (Isa 32:8), and sometimes occurs when there is no Hebrew equivalent (Prov 13:11, 19).<sup>42</sup> Εὐσέβεια is prominent in other Hellenistic Jewish works such as the Letter of Aristeas,<sup>43</sup> the fourth *Sibylline Oracle*,<sup>44</sup> Philo,<sup>45</sup> and Josephus.<sup>46</sup> Despite the paucity of references to piety in the Septuagint, Quinn posits that Titus’ description of the “knowledge of the truth” as being “in accordance with piety” (ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας τῆς κατ’ εὐσέβειαν, Titus 1:1) recalls Isaiah 11:2’s pairing together of “a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord” (rendered in Greek, πνεῦμα γνώσεως καὶ εὐσεβείας).<sup>47</sup> Thus within Hellenistic Jewish literature, εὐσέβεια is employed to describe the knowledge of and deferential awe toward God (i.e., fear of the Lord) as well as a dutiful lifestyle that follows from such knowledge and reverence—meanings that well encapsulate the Pastoral Epistles’ use of εὐσέβεια to describe Christian faith (e.g., 1 Tim. 3:16; 6:3–5) and way of life (e.g., 1 Tim. 2:2; 4:7). Quinn argued that just as Hellenistic Jews employed terms like εὐσέβεια in order to translate their traditional teachings without compromising

<sup>42</sup> See esp. Foerster, *TDNT* 7.179 for his analysis of the occurrences of εὐσέβεια and its related word group within the Septuagint and Hellenistic Jewish literature. According to Foerster, the εὐσεβ- word group is “comparatively rare in works close to Palestinian thought and speech,” due to a “conscious repudiation of Hellenising usage of the LXX and of Hellenism generally” (p. 179).

<sup>43</sup> Εὐσέβεια occurs 8 times. As an adjective (εὐσεβής), it occurs 3 times, e.g., Let. Aris. 24, 42, 131, 210, 229.

<sup>44</sup> Εὐσέβεια occurs 5 times. The verb (εὐσεβέω) appears once and the adjective occurs 5 times, e.g., Sib. Or. 4.35, 4.169.

<sup>45</sup> Εὐσέβεια and its related word group occur over 200 times, e.g., *Congr.* 160; *Decal.* 120; *Flaccus* 103; *Legat.* 279; *Opif.* 172, see chapter 5. Cf. Stephen C. Mott, “Greek Ethics and Christian Conversion: The Philonic Background of Titus II 10–14 and III 3–7,” *NovT* 20 (1978): 22–48.

<sup>46</sup> Εὐσέβεια and its related word group occurs 145 times, e.g., *Ag. Ap.* 2.125, 188, 291; *Ant.* 2.125, 170; 7.269; 9.236; 10.45; *Life* 113, see chapter 2.

<sup>47</sup> Quinn, *Titus*, 285.

their integrity, so also the Pastoral Epistles deploy εὐσέβεια in order to communicate in a recognizable manner with its Greco-Roman neighbors.<sup>48</sup> According to I. Howard Marshall and echoed by Philip Towner, the importance of Hellenistic Judaism for understanding the theological and perhaps even missiological dimensions of εὐσέβεια had been overlooked by Dibelius, Conzelmann, Foerster and those influenced by their emphasis upon the Greek background of piety.<sup>49</sup> Towner has even gone so far as to contend that the Hellenistic Jewish use of εὐσέβεια, over against its use in other Greek and Roman social and literary contexts, was *determinative* for its use and meaning within the Pastoral Epistles.<sup>50</sup> While the Pastoral Epistles were likely influenced by the use of εὐσέβεια within Hellenistic Judaism for translating Jewish beliefs and practices in terms recognizable to outsiders, the influence of this literature should not be over-emphasized at the expense of recognizing the numerous resonances of the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety with other intersecting cultural domains within the Roman Empire.<sup>51</sup>

### **Roman *Pietas* and the Pastoral Epistles**

Quinn was also persuasive in promoting the idea that Roman notions of

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 287–88; so also Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 138–44; Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 171–74.

<sup>49</sup> Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 139–40; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 171–72.

<sup>50</sup> Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 173. See also, Mott, “Greek Ethics,” 22–48.

<sup>51</sup> In contrast to Towner, it is unnecessary to imagine Hellenistic Judaism as the *determinative* channel for either the Pastoral Epistle's use of piety or its reception among early audiences. Rather, I follow Zamfir's opinion (*Men and Women in the Household of God*, xiv): “I do not assume that Christianity came under Greek and Roman influence mainly through the mediation of (Hellenistic) Judaism, but I consider that both Jewish and Christian communities in Asia Minor were part of the same cultural environment and were exposed to the same influences.”

*pietas* influenced the Pastoral Epistles' understanding of εὐσέβεια. Quinn cites the French philologist Georges Dumézil's insightful definition of *pietas*:

*Pietas* consists in conformity with normal, traditional, indisputable relationships...which exist reciprocally between people of the same blood and same *ciuitas*, between neighbors, between allies, and between contracting parties; or, without reciprocity, between the individual and that which is superior to him—his country, the gods, and finally humanity.<sup>52</sup>

Cicero describes *pietas* as “the feeling which renders kind offices and loving service to one’s kin and country”<sup>53</sup> and as arising from “the knowledge of the gods.”<sup>54</sup> Quinn, imagining that Paul himself wrote the Pastoral Epistles from Rome,<sup>55</sup> considered the relevancy of Paul’s use of piety “in a city that had temples to personified Pietas and to Spes [‘hope’] in the *forum holitorium* [‘the vegetable-market’], as well as a temple

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<sup>52</sup> Georges Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, trans. Phillip Krapp (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1970), 1.133; quoted in Quinn, *Titus*, 289.

<sup>53</sup> Cicero, *Inv.* 2.53.161 (Hubbell, LCL): *pietas, per quam sanguine coniunctis patriaeque benivolum officium et diligens tribuitur cultus*. Cf. *ibid.*, 2.53.161, just above the previous passage: “Religion (*religio*) is that which brings men to serve and worship a higher order of nature which they call divine. In Cicero’s early writings, he differentiates *religio* from *pietas*. However, in later writings, Cicero incorporates dutiful devotion to the gods in his definition of *pietas*. On the development of *pietas* within Cicero’s thought, see Hendrik Wagenvoort, *Pietas: Selected Studies in Roman Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 1–20. Wagenvoort suggests that Cicero had been influenced by the Greek Stoic philosopher Posidonius in his expansion of the meaning of *pietas* to embrace the Greek virtue εὐσέβεια and its connotation of reverencing the divine.

<sup>54</sup> Cicero, *Nat. d.* 2.61.153 (Rackham, LCL): *cognitionem deorum, e qua oritur pietas*.

<sup>55</sup> While Quinn is right to direct our attention to the intersections of Roman *pietas* with the use of within the Pastoral Epistles, I am not persuaded by either his identification of the historical Paul as the author or Rome as the *sitz-im-leben* of these pseudepigraphal epistles. Helmut Koester has suggested that Pastoral Epistles likely originate from somewhere around the Aegean Sea since the geographical locations referenced in these epistles include cities all around this area; see *Introduction to the New Testament, Volume 2: History and Literature of Early Christianity*. 2nd ed. (New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2000), 307. While, it is difficult to assign any location to these epistles with much certainty, I am persuaded by the suggestions of Korinna Zamfir and Paul R. Trebilco that these letters were likely composed somewhere in Western Asia Minor, possibly even Ephesus. See Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 8 and Paul R. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004) 205.

for Fides [‘faith(fulness)’].”<sup>56</sup> However doubtful his suggestion that Paul wrote this epistle in Rome might be, Quinn, like Foerster before him, correctly identified an essential function of the Pastorals’ rhetoric of piety: εὐσεβ- terminology reflects language, as it was used in the worship and catechism of the church, functioned to form Christians in behavior that would be attractive to outsiders.<sup>57</sup>

Within the past decade, Mary Rose D’Angelo and Angela Standhartinger have significantly advanced our understanding of how the discourse of imperial Roman *pietas* intersects with the Pastoral Epistles. D’Angelo demonstrated that the Pastoral Epistles are illustrative of, and cannot be understood apart from, early Christian accommodation to the imperial propaganda that associated *pietas* with traditional Roman social values.<sup>58</sup> Standhartinger’s contribution lies in her survey of how *pietas* became a central image of imperial self-representation during the reigns of Trajan (98–117 C.E.) and his successor Hadrian (117–138 C.E.). In this context, *pietas* signified the imperial family’s faithfulness to the gods, which in turn secured divine blessings of social prosperity and peace for the Roman people.<sup>59</sup> Both projects read

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<sup>56</sup> Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, 289.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 289. Quinn states, “The PE are missionary documents produced by a missionary religion, and the use of \*seb/m- terminology support this view. The values grounded on *pietas* in pagan Rome offered a point of departure for showing what Christians meant by *eusebeia*, and they took up the \*seb/m- language to explore the area” (p. 289).

<sup>58</sup> Mary Rose D’Angelo, “Εὐσεβεία: Roman Imperial Family Values and the Sexual Politics of 4 Maccabees and the Pastorals,” *BibInt* 11 (2003): 139–65. D’Angelo does note that qualify this assessment, stating that “despite the Pastorals’ rather conspicuous accommodation to Roman imperial values, the need for ultimate resistance is recognized. In 2 Timothy, the characterization of Paul as martyr speaking from beyond the grave (4:6–8) grounds repeated exhortations to co-suffer (1:8; 2:3,11; 4:5). 1 Timothy holds up for its addresses the example of Jesus who made the good confession before Pilate (1 Tim. 6:13–14). Thus in both works, as, I believe, throughout the period, accommodation and resistance are not separate but mutually dependent reactions” (pp. 163–64).

<sup>59</sup> Standhartinger, “*Eusebeia*,” 76.

Hellenistic Jewish literature, including 4 Maccabees, Josephus, and Philo, as informative analogues for interpreting how claims to piety can serve an apologetic appeal to imperial power. Additionally, both trace the intersections between Roman imperial ideologies and what can be identified as the kyriarchical<sup>60</sup> assumptions that inform the Pastorals' representation of the ideal *ekklēsia* as a well-ordered household.<sup>61</sup> My project extends the insightful analysis of D'Angelo and Standhartinger on the intersection of Roman *pietas* with the Pastoral Epistles' appeals to εὐσέβεια by providing a more robust account of the imperial situation into my analysis of contemporary discourses of piety, including those operative within Josephus and Philo.

### **Location of this Study within the History of Scholarship**

This study builds upon the foundational work of this rich scholarly history in its examination of the rhetoric of piety in the Pastoral Epistles. As we have seen, scholars have been dissatisfied with the conclusions of Dibelius, Conzelmann, and Foerster that εὐσέβεια in the Pastoral Epistles denotes a primarily “secular” meaning of giving due reverence to the established social orders, even while bearing

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<sup>60</sup> Kyriarchy is a term coined by Schüssler Fiorenza to replace the use of ‘patriarchy’ in critiques of domination and power to signify the multiple and intersecting ways in which domination is structured and operates. See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Democratizing Biblical Studies: Toward an Emancipatory Educational Space* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 111–16, esp. 112: “Kyriarchy is best theorized as a complex pyramidal system of intersecting multiplicative social and religious structures of superordination and subordination, of ruling and oppression. Kyriarchal relations of domination are built on elite male property rights as well as on the exploitation, dependency, inferiority, and obedience of wo/men.”

<sup>61</sup> On the topic of the representation of the *ekklēsia* as the household of God and its implications for social ordering within the community, including especially the role of women within ministry, I cannot recommend enough the recent monograph, Korinna Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*. See also Ch. 4.



new “Christian” motivations for doing so. Each response to their conclusions has sought to explain more precisely how this virtue relates to the theological commitments of the Pastoral Epistles and how it has become “Christianized.” For some scholars, like Wainwright, the demonstration of the *theological* underpinning of εὐσέβεια buttresses the historical continuity between the apostle Paul and the Pastoral Epistles. For Wainwright, εὐσέβεια “does not promote an innovative acceptance of a more socially harmonious Greek ethic, but instead is used as an exhortation to maintain the practice and tradition of orthodox, apostolic Christianity.”<sup>62</sup> This sentiment is echoed in Ben Witherington III’s assessment that the Pastoral Epistles’ appropriation of piety, among other virtues esteemed by Greco-Roman moralists and rhetoricians, is not indicative of the church’s “banal and weak capitulation” to the values and pressures of secular society, but rather “grew out of and was deeply grounded in those radical faith commitments to Jesus the Savior.”<sup>63</sup> Thus, the theological meaning of εὐσέβεια becomes bound to broader appraisals of the authority and relevance of the Pastoral Epistles for modern Christian self-formation: the tighter the connection between the Pastoral Epistles and the historical Paul, the surer the authority of these texts for Christians.

In contrast to studies that have gravitated toward explaining what piety in the Pastoral Epistles *means*, I am particularly interested in examining what claims to piety *do*. That is to say, this dissertation explores what kind of socio-political work appeals to piety performed in the Roman Empire in order to explain what claims to

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<sup>62</sup> Wainwright, “Eusebeia,” 221.

<sup>63</sup> E.g., see Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 150.

piety might have accomplished among the Pastorals' audiences. Although Dibelius, Conzelmann, and Foerster may not have taken sufficient account of the place of εὐσέβεια within the theology of the Pastoral Epistles, they at least gestured toward an important aspect of what this virtue might have rhetorically accomplished. Dibelius's suggestion that the author of the Pastorals employed piety, along with other virtues, in order to construct an "*Ideal christlicher Bürgerlichkeit*" as a practical strategy for engaging with the world and attracting outsiders has been underappreciated for its insight. This dissertation ventures forth where Dibelius in his brevity stopped. That is, I join scholars like D'Angelo and Standhartinger in examining the socio-political ends for which piety was claimed and contested in Greco-Roman culture in order to appreciate the social, political, *and* theological significance of the rhetoric of piety in the Pastoral Epistles.

Scholars have yet to explain how the socio-political functions of rhetorical appeals to piety within the Roman Empire make intelligible the author of the Pastorals' strategic deployment of piety for addressing various concerns. For example, one could invoke piety in order to naturalize the patriarchal social order, to legitimate the authority of imperial dynasties and philosophical schools, to recognize the honorable status of patrons, and, not least of all, to demarcate social boundaries between insiders and outsiders. This dissertation seeks to explain how some early Christian communities, as represented by the Pastoral Epistles, made claims to piety in order to negotiate the social and political tensions that resulted from Roman suspicions about the legitimacy of Christian doctrine and practice as well as to differentiate insiders from heterodox outsiders. For this we need a

method that does not presume a distinction between the religious and the political, between the sacred and the secular. Thus, this project seeks to illuminate the social and political aims of the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety by reading the Pastoral as participants in broader discourses on piety operative within the Roman Empire.

## **OVERVIEW AND METHOD OF *THE RHETORIC OF PIETAS***

The dissertation is divided into three parts. Each part explores how the rhetoric of piety within the Pastoral Epistles is illuminated by the use of piety within one of three different, yet intersecting, cultural domains of the Roman Empire: imperial propaganda, civic benefaction, and philosophy. Each part contains two chapters; the first focuses on the domain in question while the second analyzes how it sheds light upon the rhetoric of piety in the Pastoral Epistles.

In these analyses I apply a rhetorical approach that is in interdisciplinary conversation with Roman studies, archaeology, gender studies, sociology, and post-colonial criticism. This study examines a range of ancient sources, including coins, Roman poetry, monumental inscriptions, Jewish literature, and philosophical treatises to ask how each deploys piety and to what ends. I do not assume that the author of the Pastorals was *directly* influenced by the sources discussed in this study. And so this project does not aim to identify the *dominant* context that explains the *singular meaning* of piety. Rather, I seek to explain how the Pastoral Epistles' rhetorical claims to piety are informed by *multiple* and *overlapping* cultural domains prevalent throughout the Roman Empire—particularly within Asia Minor where the Pastorals seemed to have been composed and read in the second century

C.E.<sup>64</sup> I am especially interested in how appeals to piety function to reinscribe, disrupt, and/or negotiate discourses about political power, patriarchy, social status, and knowledge about the divine. Through a rhetorical analysis of the Pastoral Epistles that takes seriously its engagement with its contemporary cultural milieu, I suggest that we can understand the historical-rhetorical situation that informed the author's strategic deployment of piety with more precision than previous studies on the Pastorals have proffered.

### **Rhetoric, the Rhetorical Situation, and the Historical-Rhetorical Situation**

So what then do I mean by the “rhetoric of piety”? For the purposes of this study, rhetoric points toward strategic attempts to persuade within specific socio-political contexts.<sup>65</sup> This use of rhetoric stands in contrast to methods of rhetorical analysis that seek to categorize the language and arguments of the Pastoral Epistles according to different tropes and genres of ancient oration, as detailed in ancient textbooks on rhetoric by Aristotle and Quintillion.<sup>66</sup> Scholars including Abraham Malherbe, Lewis R. Donelson, and Mark Harding have supplied valuable insight into

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<sup>64</sup> Beyond the fact that the rhetorical setting of the inscribed audiences of 1 and 2 Timothy is located within Ephesus, the earliest attestation of the Pastoral Epistles seems to be the letter of Polycarp of Smyrna to the Philippians (*Phil.* 4.1). Western Asia Minor is also seen as the probable cultural environment where the Pastorals were likely composed and received early on by Zamfir (*Men and Women in the Household of God*, 8) and Trebilco (*Early Christians in Ephesus*, 205).

<sup>65</sup> Cp. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's definition of rhetoric within the context of what she describes as “rhetorical criticism” in *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 108: “rhetoric seeks to persuade and to motivate people to *act rightly*. Rhetoric seeks to instigate a change of attitudes and motivations, and it strives to persuade, to teach, and to engage the hearer/reader by eliciting reactions, emotions, convictions, and identifications.”

<sup>66</sup> The work of George A. Kennedy has been influential within the field of New Testament studies; see esp. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); idem., *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1984).

the Pastorals' use of paraenesis and deliberative rhetoric, which underlines its exhortation of the *ekklēsia* to embody correct behavior and beliefs.<sup>67</sup> Although I share with such studies an interest in exploring the history of how language is used within its socio-political context, my analysis of rhetoric is not tied to genres of classical rhetoric, but rather is informed by reading strategies that attend to how texts discursively construct the social world and how such constructions both are informed by and (re)form cultural assumptions about political authority, gender, and social status.<sup>68</sup>

Thus an analysis of the rhetoric of piety in the Pastoral Epistles attends to the inscribed rhetorical situation constructed by the argument and language of the

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<sup>67</sup> See Abraham Malherbe, "Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus," in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, ed. James M Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen, BZNW 125 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 297–317; Lewis R. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles*, HUT 22 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986), esp. 67–114; Mark Harding, *Tradition and Rhetoric in the Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Lang, 1998). See esp. the helpful overview of studies on the Pastoral Epistles and classical rhetoric in Harding, *What Are They Saying About the Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Paulist Press, 2001), 82–94.

<sup>68</sup> Such reading strategies are informed by the methodological concerns and theories discussed in Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004). The articulation of my method and concerns takes numerous cues from the eloquent and theoretically-informed methodology of Korinna Zamfir; see Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, xiii–xviii. See esp. p. xiv: "My main concern regards the cultural environment, the mentalities reflected in moral philosophies, political theories, drama and epigraphic sources. I am particularly interested in the *representations* of the social world, and the nature of the *discourse* articulated by ancient authors...The interest in ancient sources does not imply the assumption of direct, genetic relationship, [or] a literary dependence on the works cited in this volume. I argue that the author reiterates certain *topoi* and patterns of thought widespread in his cultural environment" (emphasis in original). Additionally, my approach to reading ancient texts has been shaped by Gabriel M. Spiegel's method for bringing out the "social logic" of a text, which examines "language with the tools of the social historian, to see it within a local or regional social context of human relations, systems of communication, and networks of power that can account for its particular semantic inflections and thus aid in the recovery of its full meaning as cultural history seeks to understand them. Only after the text has been returned to its social and political context can we begin to appreciate the ways in which both language and social reality shape discursive and material fields of activity and thus come to an understanding of a text's 'social logic' as situated language use" (Spiegel, "History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages," 65 [1990]: 59–86, quote from 77).

Pastoral Epistles and how it is both structured by and (re)structures the assumptions and values of its cultural context(s). A rhetorical situation is marked by an argumentative struggle in which an author attempts to persuade his or her audience to adopt an appropriate attitude, opinion, or behavior that is often framed in contrast to some alternative belief or practice.<sup>69</sup> Such alternatives are themselves rhetorically constructed by an author precisely in order to afford a contrast that functions to delineate the author's own position. Even the most sophisticated analysis of the inscribed rhetorical situation of the Pastoral Epistles cannot give *direct* access to "the world behind the text" or the "real" author, audience, and opponents of the Pastorals. What the Pastoral Epistles does provide is direct evidence of early Christian polemics about what constituted true piety.

Only after a careful analysis of the inscribed rhetorical situation of the Pastorals<sup>70</sup> can we attempt to reconstruct the possible historical-rhetorical

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<sup>69</sup> My description of the rhetorical situation is indebted to Schüssler Fiorenza, who herself builds upon the definition of Lloyd F. Bitzer: "a rhetorical situation is a situation in which one is motivated to a response that has the possibility for changing the situation. Such a response depends on the argumentative possibilities of the speaker as well as the possible expectations of her audience. Not only the exigence, but all these two types of constraints, which affect the audience decision or action and which are imposed on the author, constitute a rhetorical situation" (Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic*, 108). See also Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 1–14.

<sup>70</sup> While each of the letters to Timothy and Titus share broad similarities regarding their respective rhetorical situations, I do not intend to conflate the inscribed rhetorical situation of the entire Pastoral Epistles into a single description—especially since it remains unclear whether the Pastoral Epistles were written all at once or at different times. For the most part, my analysis focuses on the rhetorical situation as identifiable in 1 Timothy because the majority of references to piety occur in this letter. At times, I do turn to texts in 2 Timothy and Titus to illuminate or provide further examples of how piety is deployed by the author of the Pastoral Epistles, however no reconstruction of the rhetorical situation is made to rest solely upon any of these parallels.

situations that explain why the author deploys his rhetoric of piety.<sup>71</sup> I do not intend to provide either a positivist historical account of the “actual” Christian communities or to identify the opponents that “stand behind” the Pastorals. Rather, my modest aim is to elucidate some of the possible socio-political problems, stakes, and concerns that might account for the Pastorals’ admonishments toward wealthy women, benefactors, and rival teachers.

### **Roman *Pietas* and the Negotiation of the Colonial Situation**

So how then were appeals to piety used within Roman imperial propaganda at the turn of the second century C.E.? When we turn to literature and artifacts associated with the Emperors Trajan (98–117 C.E.) and Hadrian (117–38 C.E.), we can observe how the Roman virtue of *pietas* functioned within imperial propaganda and politics to legitimate these emperors’ reigns. Chapter 1 examines the prevalence and rhetorical function of appeals to piety that occur in Roman poetry, monumental inscriptions, and coins. *Pietas* held great cultural significance, since elite Romans and provincial subjects employed this virtue when they conceptualized imperial power and their relation to it. Coins minted during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian advertised that the imperial family, especially its women, both embodied and promoted *pietas*. Since *pietas* was indicative of a well-ordered household and secured the favor and benefaction of the gods, the message of these coins assured subjects that they were in good hands. Such claims to *pietas* also functioned to

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<sup>71</sup> For both an account and demonstration of the difference and analytical movement between the rhetorical and the historical rhetorical situation, see Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic*, 108–9, 120–28.

symbolically link the imperial dynasty of Trajan and Hadrian to that of Augustus, for whom *pietas* played a central role in the public representation of his dictatorship as exhibited in his restoration of temples and priesthods, promotion of the ideals of the Roman family, and service as *pontifex maximus*. Moreover, when we turn to such influential Roman poets and orators like Virgil and Cicero, we find that *pietas* was represented as the characteristic trait of Romans that distinguished them from all other lesser nations and explained why the gods had established them as rulers over the world. In this way, *pietas* functioned to legitimate Rome's imperial domination.

Such sources are useful for analyzing 1 Timothy's appeal to piety within the context of instructing the *ekklēsia* to offer prayers on behalf of imperial authorities (1 Tim 2:1–2) and about how women and widows ought to behave within the household of God (1 Tim 2:9–15). Scholars including D'Angelo and Standhartinger have convincingly argued that 1 Timothy's instructions on prayer and admonitions for women to marry, bear children, and remain subordinate to their husbands accommodate conservative social values promoted in imperial legislation and propaganda. However, scholars like Witherington and Towner have insisted that these passages are not indicative of accommodation, but rather a missiological approach that Christianized secular virtues for the purpose of attracting outsiders.<sup>72</sup> For example, Towner explains,

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<sup>72</sup> While Towner's and Witherington's turn to "missiological" terminology seems to represent one methodological option for moving beyond the dichotomous models of "accommodation" and "resistance," I do not find such an approach as helpful for elucidating the author of the Pastorals' engagement with Roman imperial culture as models developed within the field of postcolonial studies. My main concern is that by emphasizing the Pastorals' "Christianization" of Greek and Roman cultural assumptions and ideals, we miss how some early Christians thought that they might benefit from being recognized by outsiders as embodying familiar *Greek* and *Roman* values.



God's presence in the world aims at reformation and transformation of its structures, never uncritical acceptance of them. Tension is unavoidably created as God's values clash with the world's. Paradoxically, the household codes sought to control the effects of this tension while also sustaining it; they kept Christians engaged in the culture and urged against any radical dismantling of the social structure. Yet the instruction also encourages critical assessment of traditional assumptions and values that shape the institutions, by placing human household relationships under the Lordship of Christ and redefining things such as honor and benefaction with *agapē* and service.<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, Towner, along with Malcolm Gill, has even argued that 1 Timothy actually *resists* imperial authority and culture by appropriating such terms as "piety," "savior," and "mediator" from the imperial cult and applying them to the one "Savior" God and Jesus, "the one mediator" (1 Tim 2:3–4). How then should 1 Timothy's disposition toward imperial authority and culture be described—does 1 Timothy accommodate or resist?<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 389. See also, Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 150: "What we do not see here, then, is a simple endorsement of the status quo and calling it acceptable, much less good. A great disservice has been done to the ethical teaching in the Pastorals by those who have trivialized the teaching as if it were a banal and weak capitulations to the powers that be and the fallen structures that existed."

<sup>74</sup> See esp. Carolyn Osiek's ("PIETAS In and Out of the Frying Pan," *BibInt* 11 [2003]: 166–72) clever assessment of the state of the question regarding piety in the Pastoral Epistles: "Does *eusebeia/pietas* belong to the Roman government and its political propaganda, or are there some who do not identify with it but nevertheless do a better job, beating the Roman political machine at its own game, as it were? Is this a version of 'My Dad can beat your Dad' or 'Nobody does it better'? Or is the argument, 'See we're just like you!' as Tertullian and other apologists like Diognetus are wont to argue?" (p. 170). An analogous issue can be found in discussions about the social and political aims of 1 Peter's endorsement of the Greco-Roman household codes (1 Pet. 2:18–20; 3:1–6), as exemplified in the so-called Balch-Elliott debate. While Balch argues that 1 Peter's admonitions to accommodate to Roman social and household customs functioned to lessen Roman hostility and stigmatization toward Christians, Elliott contended that the larger project of 1 Peter is promote solidarity among Christians precisely to resist external pressures to conform to a corrupt culture. Their discussion can be found in Charles H. Talbert, ed., *Perspectives on First Peter* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), 61–101. See also David G. Horrell, whose turn to post-colonial studies as a methodological strategy for progressing the conversation past the false dichotomy between resistance and accommodation resonates with my own intervention into the history of scholarship surrounding the Pastoral Epistles; see esp. Horrell, "Between Conformity and Resistance: Beyond the Balch-Elliott Debate Towards a Postcolonial Reading of First Peter," in *Reading First Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of First Peter*, ed. Robert L. Webb and Betsy Bauman-Martin (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 111–43. According to Horrell, 1 Peter's practices a "polite resistance" or what

I have found the sociological models developed within the field of postcolonial studies useful for describing the Pastoral Epistles' complex relationship to imperial authority and culture that cannot be described as either essentially accommodation or resistance.<sup>75</sup> Biblical scholars, especially within the field of Pauline studies, have demonstrated the usefulness of applying a postcolonial optics to early Christian literature in order to better observe how such texts negotiate imperial authority and ideology in constructing a "Christian" identity.<sup>76</sup> Postcolonial analyses, as exemplified by Homi Bhabha,<sup>77</sup> attend to how colonial discourse constructs a world that justifies the colonizer's domination over the colonized and how the colonized appropriate the language of the colonizer in manners that ambiguously and simultaneously subvert and substantiate colonial ideology.<sup>78</sup>

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postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha terms "a sly civility" toward imperial power, that is to say, the author endorses as much as he can of Greco-Roman culture, while silently mocking imperial rule and culture (p. 143).

<sup>75</sup> See also Horrell, "Between Conformity and Resistance," 111–43.

<sup>76</sup> For example, see the notable essays collected in Christopher D. Stanley, ed., *The Colonized Apostle: Paul Through Postcolonial Eyes*, Paul in Critical Contexts (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2011), especially Stephen D. Moore's informed overview of Postcolonial criticism within Pauline studies, "Paul After Empire" (pp. 9–23). Other influential postcolonial works on the New Testament include: Fernando F. Segovia, *Decolonizing Biblical Studies: A View from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000); R. S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial Criticism and Biblical Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Stephen D. Moore and Fernando F. Segovia, eds., *Postcolonial Biblical Criticism: Interdisciplinary Intersections*, The Bible and Postcolonial Series (London: T&T Clark, 2005); Stephen D. Moore, *Empire and Apocalypse: Postcolonialism and the New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006); Segovia and R.S. Sugirtharajah, eds., *A Postcolonial Commentary on the New Testament Writings* (London: T&T Clark, 2007).

<sup>77</sup> See Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004), esp. 145–74.

<sup>78</sup> Within the scope of this study, ideology is comprised of the symbolic rationalization and hierarchical signification of one's relation to the world that often involves the totalizing legitimization of these same symbolic structures. According to John B. Thompson, to study ideology "is to study the ways in which meaning (or signification) serves to sustain relations of domination," that is, the asymmetrical organization of power; see Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 4.

Colonized subjects are faced with the challenge of negotiating an identity and a strategy of survival within a colonial situation often marked by the threat of violence or oppression for breaking with colonial social order.

In chapter 2, I argue that the author of 1 Timothy's appeal to piety represents his attempt to negotiate a colonial situation that was perceived to threaten the Christian *ekklēsia*. In chapters 1 and 2, I attempt to draw out the colonial (or imperial) situation of the Roman Empire that was marked by an elite Roman discourse that represented Christians as practicing a foreign superstition that jeopardized Roman civilized *mores* or customs and by the perceived threat of violence, ranging from imprisonment, social ostracism, and (rarely) execution. I contend that such imperial stigmatism and perceived oppression are addressed by 1 Timothy's rhetoric of piety within the scope of his admonitions on prayers for the governing authorities and on women's conduct. Piety in 1 Timothy 2 then, aims to construct a Christian subject that Roman authorities would recognize and approve of, while simultaneously subverting perceptions that Christians promote a superstition foreign to Roman *mores*. This apologetic tactic can also be seen in Josephus's use of piety in his negotiation of the imperial situation in his *Against Apion*, which I will also examine as a helpful analogue for illuminating the rhetorical strategy of 1 Timothy.

### **Civic Benefaction, its Ideological Assumptions, and the Prestige of Piety**

When we turn to honorary inscriptions that marked the cityscape of cities in Asia Minor, for example its well-preserved capital, Ephesus, we can observe how not only Emperors and their families, but also wealthy elites, were memorialized for

their piety. Chapter 3 seeks to contextualize the rhetoric of piety within the scope of honorary inscriptions ranging across Asia Minor in order to understand its significance within cultural assumptions about benefaction and elite competition for honor. In particular, I analyze the function of piety within a set of honorary inscriptions commemorating the pious benefaction of Gaius Vibius Salutaris to the cult of Artemis, the divine patroness of Ephesus, which were inscribed upon the Ephesus' theater and the goddess' temple wall at the turn of the second century C.E. While 1 and 2 Timothy are fictitiously addressed to Timothy in Ephesus, it is unnecessary to imagine the author of the Pastorals or his audiences as having read these inscriptions. Rather, for the purpose of this study, I analyze these Ephesian inscriptions in relation to other analogous inscriptions across Asia Minor, in order to glean insight into the ideological assumptions that informed the rhetoric of piety within honorary inscriptions prevalent throughout the province.<sup>79</sup> I argue that the ascription of piety, along with other civic virtues, to imperial and civic benefactors functioned to legitimate civic status as well as to justify large discrepancies of political influence and wealth between elites and lower classes. Through benefaction and patronage, the wealthy accrued honor and showed themselves to be fit to lead whether the affairs of the city or even of voluntary associations.

An examination of the use of piety within honorary inscriptions is helpful for understanding the rhetorical work of piety within 1 Timothy 6 in juxtaposition with exhortations about wealth, patronage, and authority within the *ekklēsia*. Chapter 4

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<sup>79</sup> I use the phrase "ideological assumptions" as a short-hand to connote cultural values and assumptions that sustains relationships of domination. See Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology*, 4.

examines how claims to piety stand at the center of inscribed social dynamics between the fictive author Paul and both false teachers and patrons. According to the perspective of the author of 1 Timothy, patrons are overstepping their authority in either teaching unsound doctrine or financing teachers whom the author criticizes as possessing a false piety (1 Tim 6:3; cf. 2 Tim 3:5). Patrons should not assume that through their benefaction they have accrued the same kind of social status and authority within the domain of the *ekklēsia*, which was typically accrued within civic life. As I will show, the author of 1 Timothy (re)defines how piety is accrued within the *ekklēsia* in order to legitimate the leadership structure endorsed by the inscribed Paul over against perceived competitors, including rival teachers and benefactors.

In order to better describe the rhetorical function of piety within honorary inscriptions in relation to 1 Timothy 6, I turn to the language of “cultural currency” and “prestige,” influenced by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital. Symbolic capital—and in turn, what I mean to convey by cultural currency and prestige—can be described as any socially constructed and recognized property or quality that becomes more or less equivalent to ‘power’ within a given cultural domain<sup>80</sup> and immersed within the politics of distinguishing and reifying cultural

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<sup>80</sup> What I term “cultural domain” closely approximates to Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of “field” and connotes the loosely bounded social domain that is characterized by an interconnected web of social relations. Bourdieu himself has defined field as: “a network, or a configuration of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (*situs*) in the structure of the distribution of a species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in a field, as well as by their objective relations to other positions (domination, homology, etc.);” see Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992), 97. Thus the

hierarchies.<sup>81</sup> Symbolic capital possesses “symbolic efficacy,” that is, a recognized cultural value that can be used, or as I prefer to extend the economic metaphor, “traded upon” across intersecting cultural domains<sup>82</sup> in order to mark, distinguish, and legitimate its possessor’s social status or to achieve other social, political, or economic effects.<sup>83</sup> I have found that conceptualizing piety as carrying prestige or symbolic “cash value” within the cultural domain of civic benefaction is helpful for explaining why benefactors would invest so much economic capital in order to be

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prestige or symbolic capital that piety carries is a function of the cultural domain or field in which piety is employed.

<sup>81</sup> Pierre Bourdieu has defined symbolic capital as “a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability that are easily converted into political positions as a local or national *notable*,” see Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1986), 291. Bourdieu has also described symbolic capital as “an ordinary property (physical strength, wealth, warlike valor, etc.) which, perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception and appreciation permitting them to perceive, know and recognize it, becomes symbolically efficient, like a veritable *magical power*: a property which, because it responds to socially constituted “collective expectations” and beliefs, exercises a sort of action from a distance, without physical contact....symbolic capital is attached to groups — or the names of groups, families, clans, tribes — and is both the instrument and the stakes of collective strategies seeking to acquire or conserve it, by joining groups which possess it (through the exchange of gifts, companionship, marriage, etc.) and by distinguishing themselves from groups which possess little or are destitute (stigmatized ethnic groups),” see Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 103–4.

<sup>82</sup> According to Bourdieu, all social fields of struggle (or cultural domains) fall under the same umbrella of a meta-field of power and for the most part share particular assumptions about the hierarchies of positions, conceptual divisions between producers and consumers, and the value ascribed to forms of capital that allow for the transfer of the cultural currency from one field to another. See Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: The Generation of a Literary Field*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 161–66. For example, David “Big Papi” Ortiz may not be recognized as a culinary expert, but the prestige that he has acquired from being the Boston Red Sox’s beloved designate hitter can be deployed within the cultural domain of food marketing to sell salsa.

<sup>83</sup> Bourdieu, *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*, trans. Matthew Adamson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 111–13. Bourdieu further explains in these passages that, symbolic capital gains its “symbolic efficacy, only when it is *misrecognized* in its arbitrary truth as capital and *recognized* as legitimate...” (p. 112), that is, symbolic capital can be used to legitimate social or cultural hierarchies only when people misrecognize such capital as inherently tied to some natural order or value and not an arbitrary signifier of distinction among a whole system of values that could be otherwise.

recognized as possessing something as seemingly intangible as piety.<sup>84</sup>

In this dissertation, I argue that the author of 1 Timothy trades upon the prestige of piety in order to mark his vision of the ideal *ekklēsia* as the legitimate institutionalization of Paul's teachings over against rival teachers as well as to persuade patrons, who have been habituated to desire this esteemed virtue, to financially support those whom the author deems to be in line with the sound and pious teachings of Jesus Christ (1 Tim 6:3).

### **The Mystery of Piety within Philosophy**

When we turn to philosophical literature, we find that piety was a widespread topic.<sup>85</sup> For some philosophers, like Epictetus (c. 55–135 C.E.), it seems that possessing the correct knowledge of the divine served to distinguish one's teachings over against rivals and may have secured the patronage of wealthy elites. For others, especially Epicureans including Philodemus (c. 110–35/40 B.C.E.) and Lucretius (c. 99–55 B.C.E.), there was a grave concern for defending the piety of their founder Epicurus from accusations of impious atheism lest their tradition and community be discredited. Chapter 5 examines how the philosophers Philo of Alexandria (c. 25 B.C.E.–50 C.E.) and Plutarch of Chaeronea (46–120 C.E.) employed

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<sup>84</sup> I do not intend to invoke Bourdieu's entire sociological framework or method. Thus, I have not adopted his concepts of symbolic capital and field, but rather employ the language of prestige, cultural currency, and cultural domains.

<sup>85</sup> Diogenes Laertius provides a catalogue of philosophers and their works that concern the notion of piety, its inverse impiety (ἀσέβεια/*impietas*), and its excess superstition (δεισιδαιμονία/*superstitio*). These philosophers who were concerned about the true nature of piety range as far back as Bias, Zeno, and Pythagoras from the sixth to fifth centuries B.C.E. and as relatively contemporaneous with the Pastoral Epistles as Philodemus, Epictetus, and Plutarch. See books 1 (Life of Bias); 7 (Life of Zeno); and 8 (Life of Pythagoras) of Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.*

piety to legitimate and to differentiate their distinct interpretations of the divine from the superstitious masses and other competing religious specialists. I selected these two philosophers, not only because they are roughly contemporary to the Pastoral Epistles, but because they too juxtapose a rhetoric of piety with terminology drawn from the Greek and Egyptian mysteries. In this chapter, I also demonstrate how allusions to the initiation rites of mysteries had become a recognizable trope within philosophical discourse. I argue that philosophers, including Philo and Plutarch, traded upon the cultural currency associated with Greek mysteries, which were popularly perceived to have encrypted ancient wisdom within their lore and rites, in order to increase the cachet of their own expertise and claim to true knowledge about the divine.

In chapter 6, I suggest that these philosophical sources help us to understand 1 Timothy's own juxtaposition of piety with mystery terminology. In 1 Timothy 3:16 introduces a poetic summation of Christ's earthly manifestation and heavenly ascension as a great "mystery of piety." Like Philo and Plutarch, the author of 1 Timothy employs of a rhetoric of piety in order to differentiate his distinctive knowledge about the divine from rival teachers. I argue that the author trades upon the cultural currency associated with both piety and mystery terminology in order to authenticate his own claim to expertise in matters of interpreting the divine. In this way, 1 Timothy could have been interpreted by ancient audiences as adopting a philosophical tactic of legitimization that defined authentic piety as comprising true knowledge of the divine. In order to buttress this suggestion, I demonstrate that the Pastoral Epistles evidence a deep familiarity with and use of terms and concepts



from the discursive register of ancient moral philosophy, including: use of medical imagery associated with philosophical psychagogy, of stereotypical invective used against sophists, and of the so-called philosophical cardinal virtues. And finally, I discuss how early audiences, especially those dwelling in Ephesus, may have interpreted 1 Timothy's "great is the mystery of piety," as competing against claims made surrounding the cult of Artemis in Ephesus. 1 Timothy 3:16 not only resonates with the Ephesian exclamation, "great is Artemis of the Ephesians" (e.g., Acts 19:28, 34), but also with the claims to piety made by the cult officers who oversaw the "mystic sacrifices" (μυστικὰς θυσίας) who described themselves as "the pious ones" (εὐσεβεῖς).

### **The Contribution of the Rhetoric of Piety**

So what then does this dissertation contribute to the study of the Pastoral Epistles and even to the study of religion more broadly? This dissertation aims to enrich modern readers' understanding of the constructed and contested nature of piety within a number of intersecting cultural domains of the Roman Empire. And indeed, this study aims to persuade readers that within the Pastoral Epistles, and especially 1 Timothy, the rhetoric of piety functioned to negotiate imperial power, to undercut the association of Christian doctrine with superstition, to naturalize the patriarchal social order, to navigate social tensions with patrons, to denigrate rival teachers, and finally to demarcate social boundaries between insiders and outsiders. Moreover, I hope that readers come away with a greater appreciation of a methodological approach that discards the anachronistic boundaries between the religion, society, and politics within the ancient world. Such an approach

investigates the social world of the New Testament not to demonstrate the uniqueness or superlative difference of Christian religion, but to consider and imagine the various ways in which early Christian language and concerns resonate with those of their socio-political context and are indicative of a dynamic Christian engagement with the world.

## Chapter One

### *Imperial Piety: Pietas among the Household of Caesar*

After the Roman emperor Augustus's death on September 2/3, 14 C.E. and in accordance with his will, his *Res gestae divi Augusti* ("Accomplishments of the Divine Augustus") were memorialized across the Roman Empire. Within the capital, they were read before the Senate, engraved upon two bronze tablets, and inscribed upon the pillars that may have marked an entrance gate into the mausoleum located at the Campus Martius adjacent to the Tiber River. Across Rome's conquered provinces the *Res gestae* were copied in both Latin and Greek upon the walls of provincial *Sebasteia* and other monuments honoring Augustus and the imperial family. Our most complete extant copies come from cities located in the province of Galatia in Asia Minor, including Apollonia, Antioch near Pisidia, and Ancyra.<sup>1</sup> In the following portion of Augustus's *Res Gestae*, we can begin to appreciate how the virtue of *pietas* was closely identified with Augustus's reign.

In my sixth and seventh consulships [28, 27 B.C.E.], after I had extinguished the civil wars, although I was in control of all affairs in accordance with the prayers of my fellow citizens, I transferred the rights of ownership from my power to that of the senate and the people of Rome. From this cause by senatorial decree I was called Augustus (Σεβαστὸς), and my entranceway was publicly crowned with laurels, and the oak wreath which is given for saving fellow citizens was set up above the gateway of my house, and a golden

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<sup>1</sup> See Allison E. Cooley's introduction in *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1–18; John Scheid, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: Hauts Faits du Divin Auguste* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007), ix–xiii.

shield, set up in the council chamber [the Curia Julia] by the senate and people of Rome, bore witness through its inscription to my valor (*virtutis/ἀρετῇν*), clemency (*ἐπέκειαν/clementiae*), justice (*δικαιοσύνη/iustitiae*), and piety (*εὐσέβειαν/pietatis*). I excelled all in rank, but I had no more power than those who shared office with me. (*Res Gestae* 34)<sup>2</sup>

And so, engraved upon columns and walls belonging to edifices venerating Augustus and his imperial household within Asia Minor where the Pastoral Epistles were likely composed and received, these engravings were neither the first nor would they be the last promotion of the Roman emperor's *pietas*.<sup>3</sup>

To what extent then did imperial propaganda about the *pietas* of the Emperor and his household illuminate the possible social and political functions of the rhetoric of piety within the Pastoral Epistles? And how might an analysis of the colonial situation of the Roman Empire inform modern readers about what was at stake for the author of the Pastorals in his claim to piety? In chapter 2, I will argue that the author of 1 Timothy's admonition for the *ekklēsia* to pray for governing authorities so that they might live a life "in all piety" (ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ; 1 Tim 2:1–2) and his representation of the "household of God" (οἶκος θεοῦ; 1 Tim 3:15) and its modest and well-ordered women as manifesting Roman *pietas* are indicative of his negotiation of the imperial situation. But in order to make this argument, I must first

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<sup>2</sup> Translation taken from Cooley, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, 99 with my own modification. See also the critical edition of Scheid, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "The Emperor and His Virtues," *Historia* 30 (1981): 298–323, who cautions against imagining that Romans would have called to mind this catalogue of virtues with the symbolism of the Augustan victory shield as it appeared on coins. "Telling against this hypothesis is the fact that the accompanying legend of CL(upeus) V(irtutis) [upon the coins] is replaced under Nero by VICT(oria) AUG(usti). What was remembered was the victory not the virtues" (307 n. 45). Nevertheless, the catalogue of virtues that included *pietas* were recorded and remembered as often as Augustus's *Res gestae* were reproduced upon edifices and temples across the Roman Empire.

describe the rhetoric of piety at work within Roman imperial ideology as evidenced in the Roman coins, literature, and legislation that textured the structures of imperial domination of the Pastoral Epistles' author and audience.

During the early principate of Octavian Augustus and the later reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, claims to *pietas* proliferated as a coveted and contested quality servicing the ideologies and power of its imperial possessors. The association of *pietas* with the emperor's character, household, and reign was marked by shrewd political calculation aimed at persuading Roman and provincial subjects about the legitimacy of the current political regime. Within imperial ideology, *pietas* signified a loyal devotion toward the gods, the nation, and family, which coalesced with Augustus's vision of restoring Rome's ancestral traditions and values (*mos maiorum*) and thus its moral grounding. Rome's citizens and provincial subjects were conceptualized as an enlarged *familia* that owed due *pietas* to Augustus, the "father of the nation" (*pater patriae*). Additionally, *pietas* signaled the Emperor's devotion to the gods, whose munificent benefactions were secured through his prayers as the *ponifex maximus*. These observations have been well-documented by Roman historian M.P. Charlesworth, who has argued that the virtues of the emperor served as propaganda that portrayed the emperor as possessing the qualities necessary to secure the welfare (*salus*) and peace (*pax*) of the Empire.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See M.P. Charlesworth, "The Virtues of a Roman Emperor: Propaganda and the Creation of Belief," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 23 (1937): 105–33; see also Andrew Wallace-Hadrill's important critical assessment of Charlesworth's proposal that the four virtues of Augustus's golden shield constitute a set of four canonical virtues that build upon the Greek philosophical virtues, especially the so-called cardinal virtues of Stoic philosophy, and Hellenistic kingship terminology, see "The Emperor and His Virtues," 300–7. Wallace-Hadrill correctly observes that there is no "stable" canon of four virtues, however, he does not seem to appreciate that within philosophical and political discourse, there does seem to be a "loose" canon of typically four virtues that are intended to signal

This chapter examines the rhetoric of *pietas* in the imperial propaganda of Trajan and Hadrian, who both reigned during the probable composition and reception of the Pastoral Epistles. The first part of this chapter looks at how claims about the piety of the emperor and the women of his household proliferated through coins minted during the reigns of both emperors. Not only did these coins signal that Rome's empire was under the right management, but also invited provincial subjects to recognize that the *pietas* which had favorably marked the reign of Augustus was present again in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian. Augustus's own *pietas* was not only memorialized in his *Res Gestae*, which were inscribed upon monumental inscriptions in Asia Minor, but was also recounted with poetic flourish in Virgil's popular epic, *The Aeneid*, which had already become a standard of Roman literature by the second century. Augustus's portrayal as the restorer of Rome's ancestral customs and values (*mores maiorum*), which was promulgated through Augustus's marriage legislation and poetry, further legitimated his imperial authority. Within the scope Augustan ideology, the *pius* and well-ordered household constituted an essential element and symbolic emblem of a *pius* and well-ordered Empire.

Additionally, this chapter will discuss how many elite Romans understood *pietas* to be the distinctive quality of the Roman nation that set Romans apart from all other nations and explained why the gods sustained Rome's imperial dominion. Within this elite discourse, non-Roman foreigners or barbarians are suspected of

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either the most pre-eminent virtues relevant for society or that encompass all the virtues, see chapter 5.

practicing an excessive *pietas* or superstition (*superstitio*), which was often perceived as posing a threat to Rome's own ancestral traditions. The beliefs and practices of both Jews and Christians were susceptible to such racially-charged prejudice and, as evidenced by Philo and Pliny the Younger, such stigmatism could lead to social ostracism and sometimes physical violence. I suggest that Rome's esteem for *pietas* and concern against *superstitio* frame the rhetorical situation of the Pastoral Epistles' own appropriation of piety and its negotiation of imperial authority and culture.

#### THE *PIETAS* OF THE HOUSEHOLDS OF TRAJAN AND HADRIAN

During the reigns of Trajan (98–117 C.E.) and Hadrian (117–138 C.E.), *pietas* was especially emphasized among the social values associated with each of their reigns.<sup>5</sup> Coins featuring busts of the emperors Trajan (figs. 1 and 2) and Hadrian (figs. 3 and 4) were disseminated with depictions of the goddess Pietas on their reverse sides.<sup>6</sup> As J. Rufus Fears observes, the deification of abstract ideas like Pietas, Concordia, Libertas, Pax, and Victoria in Roman culture was a common

<sup>5</sup> For an account of the range of virtues associated with the emperors Trajan and Hadrian, along with their families, see J. Rufus Fears, "The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology," *ANRW* 17.2:827–948, esp. 903–905; Carlos F. Noreña, "The Communication of the Emperor's Virtues," *JRS* 91 (2001): 146–168, esp. 158–9. Noreña notes, that from the period of 69 C.E. to 235 C.E., Pietas coins represent the second most popular coin-type commemorating the imperial virtues of the imperial family, representing one-fifth of all imperial virtue types minted during this period (p. 158). On the relative frequency of Pietas types on denarii, see Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West: Representation, Circulation, Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 233–34, 255–56.

<sup>6</sup> For Trajan see *BMCRE* III 403, p. 85 (fig. 1); 412, 481, p. 88, 97 (rev: draped Pietas, sacrificing over a lighted altar). For Hadrian, see *BMCRE* III 41–2, p. 242 (rev: Pietas standing, with legend, *PIETAS*); *BMCRE* III 562–5, p. 312–3 (rev: draped Pietas, with legend, *PIETATI AUG COS III P P*); *BMCRE* III 562–5, p. 312–3 (rev: draped Pietas, with legend: *PIETATI AUG COS III P P*); *BMCRE* III 684, p. 326 (obv.: Pietas, standing, sacrificing with a *patera* with the legend, *PIETAS AVG*); *BMCRE* III 685–9, p. 327 (obv.: Pietas standing, hands raised in prayer, with the legend, *PIETAS AVG*); *BMCRE* III 690–3, p. 327 (obv.: Pietas, seated, holding a *patera* and a scepter, with the legend *PIETAS AVG*).

phenomenon among ancient Indo-European cultures.<sup>7</sup> The goddess Pietas was typically depicted as a draped and veiled woman, often seated or standing beside a lighted altar. The goddess' hands are variously portrayed as pouring sacrificial libations with a *patra*, holding a scepter, covering her breast, or raised in prayer (compare figs. 1–4). When the goddess' identity is not given in the legend, it can be inferred by her *orans*-posture of prayer with raised hands (fig. 1).<sup>8</sup> In these portraits of Pietas, the goddess symbolizes a dutiful devotion to the gods that was powerfully at work within either the emperor's character or the empire itself on account of the emperor's pious reign. Carlos Noreña has suggested that coins minted at the beginning of Trajan's reign which featured Pietas may even commemorate Trajan's own *pietas* toward his deified predecessor and adoptive father, Nerva (fig. 1).<sup>9</sup> A similar rhetorical tactic can be seen in coins minted early in Hadrian's reign that display Hadrian's *pietas* toward Trajan and thus support the legitimacy of Hadrian's

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<sup>7</sup> See esp. Fears, "The Cult of Virtues," 828–33. See also Cicero's own description of this phenomenon, *Nat. d.* 2.60–2: "Many other divinities however have with good reason been recognized and named both by the wisest men of Greece and by our ancestors from the great benefits that they bestow. For it was thought that whatever confers great utility on the human race must be due to the operation of divine benevolence towards men...In other cases some exceptionally potent force is itself designated by a title of divinity, for example Faith and Mind; we see the shrines on the Capitol lately dedicated to them both by Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, and Faith had previously been deified by Aulus Atilius Calatinus. You see the temple of Virtue, restored as the temple of Honour by Marcus Again, there are the temples of Wealth, Safety, Concord, Liberty and Victory, all of which things, being so powerful as necessarily to imply divine governance, were themselves designated as gods. In the same class the names of Desire, Pleasure and Venus Lubentina have been deified—things vicious and unnatural (although Velleius thinks otherwise), yet the urge of these vices often overpowers natural instinct. Those gods therefore who were the authors of various benefits owed their deification to the value of the benefits which they bestowed, and indeed the names that I just now enumerated express the various powers of the gods that bear them" (Rackham, LCL).

<sup>8</sup> For Trajan see *BMCRE* III 723\*, 724, 725 p. 150; for Hadrian, see *BMCRE* III 82, 94, p. 250, 252. Cf. coins depicting the emperors sacrificing, e.g. for Hadrian, *BMCRE* III 46\*, 242\*, p. 244, 269.

<sup>9</sup> Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West*, 77 n. 135.



succession to the *principate* despite some public doubt.<sup>10</sup> In fact, as Noreña has shown, coins displaying Pietas were minted more than any other virtue type coin during the reign of Hadrian.<sup>11</sup> Such coins constituted a broader rhetorical strategy of imperial propaganda manifest in panegyrics, imperial benefaction, and monuments.<sup>12</sup> Qualities and conditions like piety (*pietas*), peace (*pax*), and harmony (*concordia*), signaled the empire's prosperity (*felicitas*) and the legitimacy of the rule of its capable and virtuous emperors.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Upon the reverse of this denarius, the figure of Pietas is surrounded by the legend: *PARTH F DIVI NER NEP P M TR P COS* ("Parthicus, son of the divine Nerva, Sacred to Neptune, Pontifex Maximus, Tribune of the Roman people, Consul"), see *BMCRE* III 30–2, p. 240. See also Theodor Ulrich, *Pietas (pius) als politischer Begriff im römischen Staate bis zum Tode des Kaiser Commodus* (Breslau: Marcus, 1930), 63–5.

<sup>11</sup> Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West*, 233–34. Noreña adds that the Pietas type coins were minted even more during the reign of Hadrian's successor, Antoninus Pius.

<sup>12</sup> For an overview of the discussion about whether and how coins served as vehicles of communication that functioned to persuade audiences about the authority, honor, and virtue of imperial power, see Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Image and Authority in the Coinage of Augustus," *JRS* 76 (1986): 66–87; see also Fears, "Cult of Virtues," 911; Noreña, "Communication of the Emperor's Virtues."

<sup>13</sup> On the topic of the Emperor's status as Jupiter's vice-regent over the world, see J. Rufus Fears, *Princeps a diis electus: The Divine Election of the Emperor as a Political Concept at Rome* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1977).



**Fig. 1** *BMCRE* III. 724, p. 150; 98–99 C.E.  
AN642982 © 2013 Trustees of the British Museum.  
*Obv.* Head of Trajan; *IMP CAES NERVA TRAIAN AVG GERM P M*  
*Rv.* Pietas, veiled, standing, raising right hand above lighted altar, left hand on breast; *TR POT COS II, S C*.



**Fig. 2** *BMCRE* III. 403, p. 85; 103–111 C.E.  
AN636732 © 2013 Trustees of the British Museum.  
*Obv.* Head of Trajan; *IMP TRAIANO AVG GER DAC P M TR P*  
*Rv.* Pietas, draped and veiled, standing, dropping incense on a lighted altar with her right hand, holding a scepter in the left; *COS V P P S P Q R OPTIMO PRINC, PIET.*





**Fig. 3** *RIC* II 260, p. 370; 117–38 C.E.  
 AN678436 © 2013 Trustees of the British Museum.  
*Obv.* Head of Hadrian; *HADRIANVS AVG COS III P P*.  
*Rv.* Pietas seated, holding *patera* and scepter; *PIETAS AVG*.



**Fig. 4** *BMCRE* III 1202, p. 416; 117–38 C.E.  
 AN677791 © 2013 Trustees of the British Museum.  
*Obv.* Bust of Hadrian; *IMP CAESAR TRAIAN HADRIANVS AVG P M TR P COS III*.  
*Rv.* Pietas, veiled, draped, standing before a lighted altar, raising her right hand in prayer, a box of incense in her left; *PIETAS AVGVSTI, S C*.

Trajan's own piety was further reified in Pliny's *Panegyrics*, his arch at Beneventum, and his distribution of nourishment (*alimenta*) to the young. In a speech before the Senate in 100 C.E., the newly elected consul of Rome, Pliny, eloquently praised Trajan's virtues. According to Pliny, the qualities of *pax*, *concordia*, *disciplina*, *moderatio*, and *pietas* are perceptibly manifest in Trajan's character.<sup>14</sup> For example, when Pliny considers the numerous qualities for which Trajan could be praised, he lists *pietas*, *abstinentia* (self-restraint) and *mansuetudo* (clemency) (*Pan.* 2.6). Under Trajan's rule, the gods' temples are no longer threatened with collapse (*Pan.* 51.1) and all public praise of Trajan's benefactions are directed to the gods out of reverence (*reverentia*) (*Pan.* 52.6). Furthermore, the dutiful loyalty (*pietas*) owed between masters and their slaves and freedmen has been restored (*Pan.* 42.2–3) and Rome's citizens overflow with *pietas* for their glorious *princeps* (*Pan.* 24.5).<sup>15</sup> As Fears has observed, Pliny's praise of Trajan's piety and other virtues are complemented in the reliefs of Trajan's arch at Beneventum, which was dedicated in 114 C.E.<sup>16</sup> In a large panel located on the right side of the arch's passageway, Trajan is portrayed as veiled and watching over the sacrifice of a bull. By fulfilling his dutiful ritual observance, the emperor secures the

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<sup>14</sup> See Fears, "The Cult of Virtues," 913–17. According to Fears, Pliny presents these imperial virtues as being restored to Rome, after having been absent during the tyranny of Domitian (p. 915).

<sup>15</sup> See also Pliny, *Pan.* 75.3, 79.4; where Pliny speaks further of Trajan's subject's and the senate's loyal piety toward him.

<sup>16</sup> Fears, "The Cult of Virtues," 917–22, for pictures of the reliefs, see plates XV–XX.

peace of the gods (*pax deorum*) on behalf of the empire.<sup>17</sup> Opposite to this panel, on the left side of the passageway, another relief commemorates Trajan's generous distribution of largesse to children with their fathers.<sup>18</sup> Under Trajan's reign, public loans were offered to Italian farmers and the interest paid on them would be redistributed to local children.<sup>19</sup> When Pliny recounts Trajan's largess (*congiarium*) and "nourishment" (*alimenta*) for the poor citizens of Rome (*Pan* 26–28), he describes Trajan as the "Father of the people" (*parens publicum*), who looks after Rome's children as his own (*Pan*. 26.3).

Hadrian's *pietas* could further be recognized in his elaborate benefaction to the construction, refurbishment, and completion of temples, shrines, and (cult-associated) tombs across the Roman Empire.<sup>20</sup> One of the most recognizable examples of Hadrian's benefactions that can be seen today is his reconstruction of the Pantheon in Rome, which is enclosed by the world's largest unreinforced dome. In Asia Minor, Hadrian's restoration and completion of temples, including those of the imperial cult in Smyrna and of Dionysius in Teos, are commemorated in eight

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<sup>17</sup> See also Fears, "The cult of Virtues," 918: "Trajan is Pietas; hence, the artist need only render a scene of the emperor sacrificing in order for all to understand that the blessing which ensures peace between the gods and the Roman People is embodied in the figure of the *princeps*."

<sup>18</sup> Trajan's donation of food and money to families were also commemorated upon coins, e.g., *BMCRE* III 712, p. 147; 767–70 pp. 161–62. These coins portray Trajan, seated upon a platform, directing an officer as he distributes largesse to a citizen. *Liberalitas* stands in the background. See Beryl Rawson, "Children as Cultural Symbols: Imperial Ideology in the Second Century," in *Childhood, Class, and Kin in the Roman World*, ed. Suzanne Dixon (New York: Routledge, 2001), 21–42.

<sup>19</sup> Rawson, "Children as Cultural Symbols," 24.

<sup>20</sup> See Mary T. Boatwright, *Hadrian and The Cities of the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 127–40. See also, Laura S. Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture: The Second Century Church Amid The Spaces of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 101–3.

different donor inscriptions.<sup>21</sup> According to Mary T. Boatwright, religious sites comprised about a third of Hadrian's architectural and engineering donations—"his most frequent type."<sup>22</sup> As Boatwright suggests, the ubiquity of Hadrian's pious benefaction must have made an impression upon his subjects, given the prevalence of Hadrian's name and image as inscribed upon buildings, made into statues that were placed in a temple's temenos or cella, and associated with festivals celebrating the refounding of temples.<sup>23</sup> Hadrian also expanded Trajan's program of largess to assist families across the empire's provinces.<sup>24</sup> And so, both emperors expressed their fatherly "duty" (*pietas*) toward their fictive *familia* of Roman citizens and subjects in their distribution of food and money to families, which in turn supported the filial duty (*pietas*) of Romans and provincial subjects to provide for their children.<sup>25</sup>

The women associated with the imperial household also played a prominent role within the rhetoric of *pietas* deployed by Trajan and Hadrian.<sup>26</sup> Matidia, Trajan's niece and Hadrian's mother-in-law, is celebrated as the embodiment of

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<sup>21</sup> Boatwright, *Hadrian*, 127–40, esp. 128.

<sup>22</sup> Boatwright, *Hadrian*, 128. Boatwright enumerates thirty-one contributions, which includes his "building, restoring or completing twenty temples and shrines in eighteen cities, adding sculpture and architectural decoration to four other shrines in four cities, and working on seven tombs in six different locales" (p. 127).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>24</sup> Rawson, "Children as Cultural Symbols," 33–36.

<sup>25</sup> See also, Rawson, "Children as Cultural Symbols," 33.

<sup>26</sup> The women celebrated include: Trajan's wife, Pompeia Plotina, Trajan's sister, Ulpia Marciana, her daughter Matidia, and the two daughters of Matidia, Sabina and Matidia the Younger. See especially, P. A. Roche, "The Public Image of Trajan's Family," *Classical Philology*, 97.1 (2002): 41–60; see also D'Angelo, "Εὐσέβεια," 144–45; Standhartinger, "Eusebeia," 65–68.

*pietas* in a series of gold coins (*aurea*) minted under Trajan (115–17 C.E.). The obverse displays a bust of Matidia, while the reverse displays a standing feminine figure with her arms stretched out over two children, surrounded by the legend, *PIETAS AVGVST*, “Augustan piety” (fig. 5).<sup>27</sup> Beryl Rawson suggests that such coins recommended to parents that they should fulfill their private duties of *pietas* to their children, “just as the emperor, the *pater patriae*, has attended to their interests on a public basis” (i.e., the *congiarium* and *alimenta*).<sup>28</sup> These coins could also be interpreted as celebrating Matidia’s filial duty to her two daughters, Sabina, the wife of Hadrian, and the Younger Matidia, thus signifying the imperial household as embodying *pietas*.<sup>29</sup> Hadrian’s wife Sabina was also represented as symbolically embodying *pietas* in different series of coins minted under Hadrian (figs. 6–7).<sup>30</sup> A related message seems to be communicated in a series of coins featuring the portraits of Trajan’s wife, Plotina, and Hadrian’s wife, Sabina, complemented by an image of Vesta, the goddess of the Roman hearth and home, which signaled that the imperial family exemplified and promoted the ideal Roman family.<sup>31</sup> According to

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<sup>27</sup> *BMCRE* III 658–664, p. 127–8. See also, *BMCRE* III 1088–9, p. 231 (the reverse legend reads: *PIETAS AVG*); cf. *BMCRE* III 531, p. 108. Cf. Rawson, “Children as Cultural Symbols,” 32–33, who suggests that image exhorts parents to fulfill their pious duties toward their children just as the *pater patriae* has seen to their needs through his beneficence and *alimenta*.

<sup>28</sup> Rawson, “Children as Cultural Symbols,” 33; so also Standhartinger, “*Eusebeia*,”

<sup>29</sup> Whether or not Matidia’s children were signified by children in this coin, the message still seems rather clear that the imperial household nonetheless *embodies pietas*.

<sup>30</sup> See *BMCRE* III 1896, P. 539 (rev. Pietas seated and draped, holding a patera in her right hand and a scepter in her left, *PIETAS*); 1898–99, p. 540 (rev. Pietas standing and draped, with her hands over a boy and a girl at each of her sides, *PIETAS AVG*); *RIC* II 405, p. 388 (rev. Pietas seated and draped, holding a patera in her right hand and a scepter in her left, *PIETAS AVG*).

<sup>31</sup> For Plotina, see *BMCRE* III 525–28, 646<sup>+</sup> p. 106–7, 124; see also a re-issue under Hadrian, *BMCRE* III 51\*, p. 245. For Sabina, see *BMCRE* III 915–918, 922, 1882, 1885–6, 1902, 1904 p. 356–7, 537–8,

D'Angelo, Hadrian buttressed his claim to be Trajan's legitimate successor by continuing and even expanding upon the virtues that were associated with Trajan's family during his reign.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, other coins promoted the modesty (*pudicitia*),<sup>33</sup> harmony (*concordia*),<sup>34</sup> and piety (*pietas*)<sup>35</sup> of the women of Trajan's and Hadrian's households. Pliny also celebrates the *pietas* and numerous other virtuous qualities of Trajan's family.<sup>36</sup> Pliny praises Trajan's wife, Plotina, for her modesty in attire (*modica cultu*) and for carrying herself about with silence (*cum silentio*) which she learned from the exemplary behavior of the Emperor, the *pater familia*.<sup>37</sup>

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540–1. Vesta also appears on coins featuring Trajan's bust, see *BMCRE* III 2, 25, 280\*, 405, 413, 482, 671, p. 31, 35, 71, 86, 88, 98, 131. D'Angelo notes that the juxtaposition of the women of Trajan's household with virtues, including Pietas, functioned to contrast Trajan's reign against the supposed depravity of Domitian's tyranny ("Εὐσέβεια," 144–45).

<sup>32</sup> D'Angelo, "Εὐσέβεια," 145.

<sup>33</sup> See *BMCRE* III 911–3, p. 355 (obv.: bust of Hadrian's wife Sabina; rev: portrait of a veiled Pudicitia); *BMCRE* III 529, p. 107 (obv: bust of Plotina; rev: an altar dedicated to Pudicitia). Cf. denarii portraying Hadrian with the figure of Pudicitia on its reverse, *BMCRE* III 405–14, 491–5, p. 291, 301.

<sup>34</sup> See *BMCRE* III 894–907, 929–935; p. 353–5, 358–9 (obv.: bust of Sabina; rev.: Concordia, with legend: *CONCORDIA AVG[VSTA]*).

<sup>35</sup> See *BMCRE* III 332, p. 281 (obv.: Hadrian's mother-in-law, Matidia; rev.: veiled Pietas, with legend: *PIETAS AVG*); *BMCRE* III 910\*, p. 355 (obv.: bust of Sabina; rev: veiled Pietas, with the legend: *PIETAS AVG*); see also *BMCRE* III 954f, p. 361; 960, p. 363 (obv.: bust of Sabina; rev.: legend: *PIETATI AVG*).

<sup>36</sup> See Roche, "Public Image," 43–51.

<sup>37</sup> See Pliny, *Pan.* 83.6–8.





**Fig. 5** *RIC* II. 759, p. 30; 115–17 C.E.  
 AN658077 © 2013 Trustees of the British Museum.  
*Obv.* Head of Matidia; *MATIDIA AVGVSTAE MARCIANAE F.*  
*Rv.* Diademed Matidia as Pietas standing, hands stretched over children (possibly her daughters, Sabina and Matidia the younger); *PIETAS AVGVST.*



**Fig. 6** *BMCRE* III. 1898, p. 540; 128–36 C.E.  
 AN687027 © 2013 Trustees of the British Museum.  
*Obv.* Head of Sabina; *SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVGVSTAE*  
*Rv.* Pietas standing, hands stretched over children who may be her daughters, Sabina and Matidia the younger; *PIETAS AVGVST.*



**Fig. 7** RIC II 40, p. 388; 117–38 C.E.  
AN678627 © 2013 Trustees of the British Museum.  
*Obv.* Head of Sabina; *SABINA AVGVSTA HADRIANI AVG P P*  
*Rv.* Pietas, seated, holding patera in right hand, and a scepter in her left; *PIETAS AVG*.

### Heirs of Augustus's *Pietas*

The rhetorical functions of *pietas* within the imperial propaganda of Trajan and Hadrian are further illuminated when interpreted in light of the claims to *pietas* associated with the principate of Rome's first emperor, Augustus (27 B.C.E–14 C.E.). A significant component of Augustan ideology was a grand narrative that associated the cause of the civil wars that preceded Octavian Augustus's ascension with a general decline in religious and moral observance among the Roman populace.<sup>38</sup> The prescription for Rome's religious and moral malaise was the inauguration of a golden age of cultural renewal and a return to Rome's ancestral customs or the *mos*

<sup>38</sup> See Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "The Golden Age and Sin in Augustan Ideology," *Past & Present* 95 (1982): 19–36.

*maiorum*.<sup>39</sup> Augustus himself alludes to this narrative of decline and restoration that framed his activities in his *Res Gestae*:

By the passage of new laws I restored many traditions of our ancestors that were then falling into disuse, and I myself set precedents in many things for posterity to imitate.<sup>40</sup>

Within the scope of Augustus's restitution of ancient priesthods and rituals, his ambitious building campaign that oversaw the construction and reconstruction of numerous temples (*Res Gestae* 19–21), his controversial marriage laws, and the epic poetry of Virgil, *pietas* became an important theme within Augustus's ideological restoration of the Roman constitution. According to Augustan ideology, Augustus and his household's dutiful devotion to the gods, fatherland, and family paved a path toward peace, prosperity, and security for Rome's subjects to follow. I argue that the rhetoric of *pietas* in Augustan propaganda established a precedence for how legitimate authority is represented that informed the ideological conduct and representation of Trajan's and Hadrian's reigns and, thereby, the imperial situation of the author and audience of the Pastoral Epistles.

One of the cumulative effects of Augustus's elaborate restoration of temples, priesthods, and rites and the portrayal of himself sacrificing to the gods upon coins

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<sup>39</sup> On the rhetorical function of *mos maiorum* within Roman political discourse, see Henriette van der Blom, *Cicero's Role Models: The Political Strategy of a Newcomer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 12–17; Francisco Pina Polo, "Die nützliche Erinnerung: Geschichtsschreibung, *mos maiorum* und die römische Identität," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 53 (2004): 147–172 (see also his bibliographic references, p 147 n. 2).

<sup>40</sup> *Res gestae* 8.5 (Shipley, LCL). See also, Horace, *Saec.* 57–60 (Rudd, LCL): "Now Good Faith, Peace, and Honour, along with old-fashioned Modesty and Virtue, who has been so long neglected, venture to return, and blessed Plenty with her full horn is seen by all."

and reliefs was to present Rome's *princeps* as a paradigm of *pietas*.<sup>41</sup> Among the numerous temples Augustus built and refurbished during his reign,<sup>42</sup> the awe-inspiring temple of *Mars Ultor* or "Mars the Avenger" located in the center of Augustus's own Forum especially reified Augustus's *pietas*.<sup>43</sup> This temple commemorated Mars's support of Augustus's victory at the battle of Philippi and Augustus's own filial piety in avenging the murder of his adoptive father, Julius Caesar.<sup>44</sup> Augustus's elaborate building campaign spanning decades would have made quite the impression upon those dwelling in Rome. This building program materialized in gilded marble Rome's unequivocal recommitment to its gods and the dawn of a golden age under Augustus's pious leadership. Moreover, with Augustus's reinstitution of such ancient priesthods as the Arval Brethren,<sup>45</sup> Augustan ideology further assured its citizenry and subjects that the nation could advance in

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<sup>41</sup> For an excellent account of the architectural achievement and elaborate decorations that belonged to Augustus's building campaign and the successive portrayal of Augustus's *pietas* upon altars, facades, and statues, along with their religious and political significance, see Paul Zanker, *Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 102–135.

<sup>42</sup> In his *Res gestae* 19–20, Augustus celebrates the many temples he (re)constructed ranging from the temples of Jupiter Feretrius and Jupiter Tonans on the capital and temples of Minerva, of Juno the Queen, and of Jupiter Libertas on the Aventine, in addition to the eighty-two temples he later renovated under commission from the Senate in 29 B.C.E. Additionally, in 28 B.C.E. dedicated the Temple of Apollo inside his own Palatine house (Cassius Dio, *His. rom.* 53.1.3).

<sup>43</sup> On the inspiring grandeur of this temple, see Ovid, *Fast.* 5.533–78.

<sup>44</sup> See Suetonius, *Aug.* 29.1–2; *Res gestae* 21.

<sup>45</sup> For more on the priesthods founded or reorganized by Augustus, see Zanker, *Power of Images*, 118–135.



confidence under the auspice of divine benevolence such dutiful observance secured.<sup>46</sup>

The representation of Augustus's exemplary *pietas* was additionally spread through honorary statues, cult images, architectural facades, and coins produced by the Senate and various associations, cities, and wealthy individuals. Portrayals of Augustus dressed in a toga, head veiled, and arm stretched out in the act of prayer or sacrifice proliferated as a popular imperial statue type, being replicated upon coins and even as statuettes for both public and private cults dedicated to his *genius*.<sup>47</sup> In his capacities as the *pontifex maximus* and a member of the three other preeminent priestly colleges of Rome,<sup>48</sup> Augustus played an essential role in

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<sup>46</sup> For the popular perception that Rome's superior *religio* explained the success of its constitution and conquests, see Polybius, 6.56.6–7; Propertius, *Eleg.* 4.10.64; Cicero, *N.D.* 3.5. That Rome had been under a curse for its neglect of the gods, see Horace, *Carm.* 3.6.1–8 (Rudd, LCL): "Though guiltless, you will continue to pay for the sins of your forefathers, Roman, until you repair the crumbling temples and shrines of the gods, and that statues that are begrimed with black smoke. It is because you hold yourselves inferior to the gods that you rule. For every beginning seek their approval; to them attribute its outcome. Because they have been neglected, the gods have inflicted many a woe on sorrowing Westland." Such Roman ideological assumptions also find their grounding within Greek political thought, e.g., see Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.4.16 (Marchant, LCL): "Do you not see that the wisest and most enduring of human institutions, cities and nations, are most god-fearing, and that the most thoughtful periods of life are the most religious? (θεοσεβέστατά ἐστι καὶ αἱ φρονισμώταται ἡλικίαι θεῶν ἐπιμελέσταται)."

<sup>47</sup> See Zanker, *Power of Images*, 127–28. See also Richard Gordon, "The Veil of Power: Emperors, Sacrificers, and Benefactors," in *Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World*, ed. Mary Beard and John North (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 209–213. Gordon notes that of the 230 statues of Augustus left extant today, about twenty represent Augustus in the act of sacrificing, and among these twenty, nineteen originate from Rome's provinces (p. 212). See also, Beth Severy, *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 118–31.

<sup>48</sup> Augustus celebrates his participation within these colleges within his *Res gestae* 7 (Cooley, LCL; with modifications), with the four most important colleges of Rome listed first: "[I have been] Chief priest (*pontifex maximus*), augur, one of the Fifteen in charge of sacred rites (*XV viri sacris faciundis*), one of the Seven in charge of sacred rites (*VII viri epulonum*), Arval brother, Titian companion (*soladis Titius*), and a fetial priest."

establishing peace between the gods and Rome (*pax deorum*). Both coins<sup>49</sup> and public relief friezes<sup>50</sup> celebrated Augustus's priestly roles, juxtaposing cult instruments with Augustus's name or portrait. "[Augustus's] piety was put on display for every Roman to see," Zanker argues, "making it clear that he considered the performance of his religious duties his greatest responsibility and highest honor."<sup>51</sup>

Augustus's household was also associated with *pietas* as exhibited in a relief from the *Ara Pacis*, which was dedicated by the Senate in 9 B.C.E. The depiction of the imperial family, including children, participating in a religious procession surrounded by priests and Senators was potent and polysemous. This image signaled the harmony (*concordia*) enjoyed among the governing body and commemorated the return of the *mos maiorum* as reified within Augustus social policies that encouraged marriage and child-bearing among the nobility.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> For example of coins, see *BMCRE* I 98–99, p. 20 (rev. Simpulum, lituus, tripod, and patera); 100, p. 20 (rev. Augustus veiled, togate, offering a sacrificial libation with a simpulum in hand); 544–46, p. 91 (obv. head of Augustus, laureate; rev. draped figure of Ceres [Livia?], seated; PONTIF MAXIM); 548–560, p. 92–93 (obv. head of Augustus, laureate; CAESAR PONT MAX; rev. altar of 'Roma and Augustus'). On the rhetorical function of coins minted under Augustus, their emphasis upon Augustus's piety, and the role such coins served in the promulgation of Augustan ideology (or "the Augustan political myth"), see Kathleen S. Lamp, *A City of Marble: The Rhetoric of Augustan Rome* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 2013), 80–88.

<sup>50</sup> A relief found around the Porticus Octaviae in Rome displays an arrangement of sacred objects, cultic instruments, priestly gear, and parts of a ship. Zanker has argued that the ship pieces allude to Augustus's decisive victory at Actium, and thus the relief communicates, "the superiority of the victors at Actium resulted from their respect for gods. Sacred fillets flutter over all the arms and cult instruments, indicating that *pietas* and *virtus* are the twin pillars of the renewed republic" (*Power of Images*, 126–27).

<sup>51</sup> Zanker, *Power of Images*, 127.

<sup>52</sup> See Diana E. E. Kleiner, "The Great Friezes of the Ara Pacis Augustae: Greek Sources, Roman Derivatives, and Augustan Social Policy," *MEFR* 90 (1978): 753–85, esp. 772–6; Karl Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 138, 146–55; Zanker, *Power of Images*, 122–3; 158–9; Lamp, *City of Marble*, 50–2.

According to Beth Severy, the *Ara Pacis* visually signified that “the religious center of Rome is located in Augustus’s house.”<sup>53</sup> Through the vast dissemination of such images, the people of Rome were invited to follow Augustus’s paradigmatic piety and play their own role in securing the *pax Romana* through their dutiful observance of ancestral cults and their filial devotion to Augustus, the father of their nation (*pater patriae*).<sup>54</sup>

In 18 B.C.E. Augustus passed a series of marriage laws that were central to the ideological representation of his regime.<sup>55</sup> While the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* provided social penalties and financial incentives to entice men and women, even widows, under sixty to wed and bear children, the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* stiffened regulations and penalties involving adultery.<sup>56</sup> Unmarried men and women were barred from the public entertainment of the theater, while mothers of three or more children were held in special esteem (and even given a tax break) and the

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<sup>53</sup> Severy, *Augustus and the Family*, 112. This message is also communicated in Ovid’s celebration of the monument, in *Fasti* 1.709–22, esp. 719–22: “Add incense, ye priests, to the flames that burn on the altar of Peace, let a white victim fall with wine-anointed brow, and ask of the gods, who lend a favouring ear to pious (*pia*) prayers, that the house, which is the warranty of peace, with peace may last for ever” (Frazer, rev. Goold, LCL).

<sup>54</sup> Lamp articulately spells out this imperative for the people to imitate Augustus’s piety correlative to Augustan ideology: “If the strife of the last hundred years had been caused by neglect of the gods, it was up to every Roman, regardless of social class or even gender, to do his or her part to make sure the gods were not neglected again. For wealthy Romans, that meant rebuilding temples; for urban freedmen, albeit of the highest standing, that meant serving as *vicomagistri*; and for urban plebs, nonelite women, and slaves living in the city, it meant demonstrating piety, in part by participating in the cult of the *lares Augusti*” (*City of Marble*, 125).

<sup>55</sup> The importance of these laws to Augustus’s desired self-representation is indicated by both his postponement of the *Ludi Saeculares* (Secular Games) until some of the key laws had been passed and the preeminent emphasis given to them in Horace’s *Carmen saeculare* which was performed at these games. See Karl Galinsky, “Augustus’ Legislation on Morals and Marriage,” *Phil* 125 (1981): 126–44; idem, *Augustan Culture*, 128–140, esp. 128 n. 109, 131.

<sup>56</sup> The law even went so far as to criminalize husbands as pimps for not reporting their wives caught in the act of adultery.

fathers given preference in political offices over unmarried or childless rivals.<sup>57</sup>

Through these laws, Augustus reconstituted the ideal Roman citizen as married and procreative.<sup>58</sup> Despite the legislation's unpopularity among the nobility and its perceived overreach into the private domain of the father's authority over his own household (*patria potestas*), the Augustan marriage laws were upheld for over two hundred years,<sup>59</sup> with revisions made by Augustus in 9 C.E. with the *Lex Papia Poppaea* and again later under Tiberius.<sup>60</sup>

Concurrent with these laws are Horace's poetic sentiments that link the defilement of "marriage, the family, and homes" with the erosion of the country and people which had occurred in the times preceding Augustus's regime.<sup>61</sup> Although

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<sup>57</sup> See Susan Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges From the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993) 60–80. One aim of this law was to stimulate childbirth rates among the nobility whose numbers were dwindling in relation to the number of slaves being manumitted and producing children in higher numbers. Third-century C.E. historian, Dio Cassius captures well the civic stakes behind Augustus's legislation in a recreated address attributed to Augustus directed toward the nobility (*His. rom.*, 56.1–9.). In this scathing speech, Augustus charges equestrian bachelors with impiety for abolishing the Roman family and for withholding future Roman descendants from defending the state and maintaining the temples and rites of the gods (*His. rom.*, 56.5.),

<sup>58</sup> Bruce W. Winter has argued that that the Augustan legislation was, in part, a response to the rise among the aristocratic elite women, the so-called "new" Roman women, who indulged in sexual promiscuity and luxurious fashion in the manner of courtesans; see *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 17–58.

<sup>59</sup> Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 128.

<sup>60</sup> For the laws' unpopularity and Tiberius's modifications, see Tacitus, *Annals* 3.25–28; see also Suetonius, *Aug.* 34.1.

<sup>61</sup> Horace, *Carm.* 3.6.17–18 (Rudd, LCL): "Generations prolific in sin first defiled marriage, the family, and the home. From this source is derived the disaster which has engulfed our fatherland and its folk" [*fecunda culpa saecula nuptias primum inquinavere et genus et domus; hoc fonte derivate clades in patriam populumque fluxit*]. See Catharine Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality in ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 34–63, esp. 36, 43–47.



such poetic musings were likely seen as reductionistic even in Augustus's age,<sup>62</sup> they are indicative of the ideology of moralists of the late Republic that linked the prosperity of the Roman people with the ordering of the Roman home and virtue. Under the paternal direction of Augustus, the father of country (*pater patriae*),<sup>63</sup> Rome could finally get its house in order again, re-establishing the superior moral fiber of its nobility that made them fit to rule over less civilized nations.<sup>64</sup> As Roman historian, Catherine Edwards, succinctly states, "[t]o suppress license was to guarantee political stability."<sup>65</sup> And so, piety would become further associated with imperial authority in so far as the emperor was heralded as the fatherly restorer, regulator, and protector of the social values surrounding the Roman *domus* (household), including *pietas*.

And finally, *pietas* became further ideologically associated with Augustus and his imperial reign within Virgil's *Aeneid*. This epic poem follows the odyssey of its protagonist, Aeneas, one of the founding fathers of the Roman nation and alleged ancestor of Augustus, from his daring escape of the fall of Troy to his eventual settlement within Italy. *Pietas* represents an important *leitmotif* as evidenced in the

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<sup>62</sup> See Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 136.

<sup>63</sup> In his *Odes* (*Carm.* 3.24.25–29) published in 23 B.C.E, Horace had linked the honorary title of "Father of the City" (*pater urbium*) with the duty of "curbing [sexual] license" (*refrenare licentiam*) and "ending impious murder and civic madness (*inpias* [sic!] *caedis et rabiem tollere civicam*)" (*Carm.* 3.24.25–29). This conceptual link was likely still active, when in 2 B.C.E., the Senate bestowed the title "Father of the Country" (*pater patriae*) upon Augustus. Cf. Cassius Dio, *Hist. rom.* 53.18.3.

<sup>64</sup> For more on the link between the Roman ideology that justified conquest on the basis of its superior virtue and Augustus's solicitation of morals among Rome's ruling elite, see Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 133–6; Galinsky, "Augustus' Legislation," 126–44; see also Chapter 4.

<sup>65</sup> Edwards, *Politics of Immorality*, 36.

hero's characteristic nomenclature, "*pius Aeneas*" (*pius Aeneas*)<sup>66</sup> and in Aeneas's display of dutiful commitment to the gods, his father, and his progeny. Indicative of Virgil's emphasis upon Aeneas's *pietas*, the second sentence of the *Aeneid* poses the following question to the inspiring Muse:

Tell me, O Muse, the cause; wherein thwarted in will or wherefore angered, did the Queen of heaven drive a man so famous in *pietas* (*insignem pietate virum*), to traverse so many perils, to face so many toils.<sup>67</sup>

Aeneas's piety is most famously displayed during this heroic escape from Troy, in which he leads his son by hand and bears both his father and the gods of his home (*penates*) upon his shoulders to safety.<sup>68</sup> The multivalence of Aeneas's *pietas* as directed toward his family, his gods, and to his country is caught up in his steadfast obedience to the wishes of his deceased father and the command of the gods to reach Italy.<sup>69</sup> Despite the tempting allure of remaining with Dido in Carthage or the machinations of Juno, Aeneas remains obedient to Jupiter's command that he should settle the remnant of his fellow Trojans in Italy and secure his progeny's destined imperial inheritance of Latium. As Anton Powell observes, Aeneas's definitive

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 1.378.

<sup>67</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.8–11 (Fairclough and Goold, LCL, with my own modification): *Musa, mihi causa memora, quo numine laeso quidve dolens regina deum tot volvere casus insignem pietate virum, tot adire labors impulerit.*

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 2.705–729. While Aeneas leads his wife and son behind him, only his son, Ascanius-Iulus, survives.

<sup>69</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid*, 4.331–61; for a fuller treatment of Virgil's portrayal of Aeneas as *pius*, see Anton Powell, *Virgil the Partisan: A Study in the Re-integration of Classics* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2008), 31–40; see also Vassiliki Panoussi, "Aeneas' Sacral Authority," in *A Companion to Virgil's Aeneid and its Tradition*, ed. Joseph Farrell, Michael C. J. Putnam (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 52–65 on Aeneas's assumption of religious duties in his role as the *paterfamilias* of the nascent Roman nation which corresponds to the divine sanction of his mission.

qualification as pious overshadows even his military prowess, an emphasis one might expect given the poem's generic predecessors, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.<sup>70</sup>

Although it is inappropriate to envision Virgil as a court poet writing under the heavy-handed oversight of Augustus,<sup>71</sup> Virgil's partisan portrayal of Aeneas as "pious" functioned politically to legitimate Octavian Augustus's reign. As the ancestor of Aeneas, Augustus is depicted as fit to rule Rome since *pietas* runs in his

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<sup>70</sup> Powell, *Virgil the Partisan*, 32–33. Displaying *Aeneid*, 1.544f; 6.403; 6.769, Powell demonstrates that whenever *pietas* and military adeptness are mentioned together in reference to Aeneas, "the soldering comes second" (p. 33). However, scholars like W. R. Johnson ("Aeneas and the Ironies of *Pietas*," *CJ* 60 (1965): 360–364) have questioned whether Virgil subtly undercuts Aeneas's *pietas* in his refusal to offer mercy to his opponent, Turnus, as a tactic of sly subversion to any claim that might be made about Augustus' *pietas*. In the final climatic battle between Aeneas and his Italian rival Turnus, Turnus, facing the edge of Aeneas's sword, appeals to Aeneas for mercy out of pious pity for his aged father, who should not bear the grief of losing his son. Nevertheless, Aeneas slays Turnus in wrathful vengeance for Turnus having slain his young apprentice-in-arms Pallas (*Aeneid*, 12.919–52). For Johnson, the death of Turnus along with the tragic costs of human lives that result from the Aeneas's war against some of the inhabitants of Latium, reminds the reader of the suffering and moral corruption that occurs on the path to civilization (p. 364). However, Powell (*Virgil the Partisan*, 77) rightly recognizes that the loudest overtone of this passage is Aeneas's own pious justification for slaying Turnus as upholding a sacred charge given to him by Pallas's father, Evander, to avenge his son's death (Virgil, *Aeneid*, 11.178–79). According to Powell, "the image of a *pious* ancestor whose last action in the poem, the killing of Turnus, would be one of *pietas*-as-revenge, reminiscent of Octavian's claim to avenge Caesar in blood" (*Virgil the Partisan*, 77). Rather than complicate the *Aeneid*'s vindication of Octavian Augustus's predecessor, the death of Turnus largely complements the overall picture in dramatic fashion. See also Hans-Peter Stahl, "The Death of Turnus: Augustan Virgil and the Political Rival" in *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*, ed. Kurt Raaflaub and Mark Toher (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 174–211.

<sup>71</sup> For a brief account of the post-World War II scholars who have been pessimistic about Virgil's participation within the propagandistic program of Augustus, S. J. Harrison, "Some Views of the *Aeneid* in the Twentieth Century," in *Oxford Readings in Virgil's Aeneid*, ed. S. J. Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 1–20; Powell, *Virgil the Partisan*, 7–13. For an account of the relation and politics between, Augustus, Maecenas (friend of Augustus, and patron of Virgil, Horace, etc.), and the poets, see Jasper Griffen, "Augustus and the Poets: 'Caesar qui cogere posset,'" in *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, ed. Fergus Millar and Erich Segal (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 189–218; idem., "Augustan Poetry and Augustanism," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, ed. Karl Galinsky (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 306–20. See also Duncan F. Kennedy's theory-laden essay complicating the practice of labeling a feature of a text as either supporting or opposing Augustan ideology, "'Augustan' and 'Anti-Augustan': Reflections on Terms of Reference," in *Roman Poetry & Propaganda in the Age of Augustus*, ed. Anton Powell (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1992), 26–58.

veins.<sup>72</sup> For those who endured the proscriptions issued during Octavian Augustus's political alliance with Lepidus and Antoninus (i.e. the so-called Second Triumvirate, 43–33 B.C.E.),<sup>73</sup> such a claim might appear particularly bold.<sup>74</sup> According to Anton Powell, *pietas* had practically been outlawed under the proscriptions, since slaves and family members were expected to assist in the capture and execution of those publically condemned by the Triumvirs lest they, too, be added to the public hit-list of the proscriptions.<sup>75</sup> Powell continues, “[i]n making *pietas* the central virtue of the *Aeneid*, Virgil was attending to the most defective aspect of Octavian’s past.”<sup>76</sup> The *Aeneid* effectually acquits Augustus of any association with impiety,<sup>77</sup> that is, of disrupting filial duty and loyalty, by implying that Augustus shares in his ancestor’s *pietas* toward his family and nation.<sup>78</sup> In *Aeneid* 1.294–6, Jupiter’s prophecy alludes

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<sup>72</sup> For references to Augustus in the *Aeneid*, see Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.286–88; 6.789–93; 8.671–731. Indicative of this genetic advantage in piety, Marcellus, the nephew of Augustus, is poetically eulogized as possessing noteworthy *pietas*, Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.878.

<sup>73</sup> In the wake of political instability that followed Julius Caesar’s assassination, Octavian brokered a political alliance with Marcus Aemilius Lepidus and Marcus Antonius, granting each consular power, ratified by the senate and Roman people for the purpose of reconstituting the republic. An orchestrated series of political murders in the form of proscriptions soon followed the radical restructuring of power, resulting in the elimination of political rivals and personal enemies whose names were published upon a public hit-list and providing a modest windfall of wealth due to the confiscation of the property of those who were proscribed; see Cassius Dio, *His. rom.* 47.1–19.

<sup>74</sup> Kathryn Welch goes so far as to describe the Triumvirate’s inclusion of family members on the proscription list as “tantamount to a declaration of war on *pietas* itself,” see *Magnus Pius: Sextus Pompeius and the Transformation of the Roman Republic* (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2012), 174.

<sup>75</sup> See Anton Powell who argues that “for the Triumvirs, there could be no *pietas* towards the condemned...[o]n the face of it, *pietas* had been outlawed” (*Virgil the Partisan*, 59).

<sup>76</sup> Powell, *Virgil the Partisan*, 75; see also Stahl, “Death of Turnus,” 177–78.

<sup>77</sup> That some contemporaries did in fact associate Augustus with impiety is suggested by Suetonius, *Aug.* 70.1.

<sup>78</sup> See Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.789–93.

to Augustus's bringing an end to the impious frenzy of (civil) war (*Furor impius*), thus demarcating the political boundaries of piety between Augustus and his rivals. As a result, political opponents against Augustus's destined imperium stand on the wrong side of history and piety.<sup>79</sup> And yet, for whatever reason Virgil does not overtly describe Augustus himself as pious. However, ancient audiences were sure to have inferred such a connection between Augustus and Aeneas from their general overlap.<sup>80</sup> As Hans-Peter Stahl comments,

Could any reader in the time of Augustus fail to observe the symphonic pitch in epic and present-day political pronouncements, e.g., the declared desire for peace and the unwelcome burden of having had to wage a holy war against sacrilegious rebels who threatened the community?<sup>81</sup>

Augustus so valued the poetic portrayal of Rome's national hero and presumably the positive light it refracted toward himself such that he eagerly anticipated its

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<sup>79</sup> One of the more serious political and military challenge to Octavian Augustus's political aspirations was that of Pompey's surviving son, Sextus Pompeius, who took the cognomen *Magnus Pius* or "The Great Pius one." Pompeius's *pietas* signified his dutiful faithfulness to his father's vision for Rome and his devotion to the republic, which he portrayed himself as attempting to restore from the tyrannical and impious grasp of second Triumvirate. Sextus would eventually be defeated in 35 B.C.E. See esp. Welch, *Magnus Pius*; Kamil Kopij, "Pietas in the Propaganda of Sextus Pompey," *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 15 (2011): 203–18; see also Theodore V. Buttrey, "The 'pietas' denarii of Sextus Pompey," *Numismatic Chronicle* 20 (1960): 83–101, esp. 85–90; Benedict J. Lowe, "Sextus Pompeius and Spain: 46–44 BC," in *Sextus Pompeius*, ed. Anton Powell and Kathryn Welch (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2002), 65–102.

<sup>80</sup> Powell suggests that given the general "certainty that as Triumvir [Octavian-Augustus] had violated *pietas*," a direct appeal to history would prove an ineffective route to shore up Augustus's ideological deficiency—rather more subtle means were required; *Virgil the Partisan*, 77, see also 44–7, 78. Cf. *Aeneid* 6.678–81, where Virgil associates Octavian with the cause of *pietas* by depicting Octavian as leading the Penates and great gods of Rome against Antony.

<sup>81</sup> Stahl, "Death of Turnus," 176. On the qualities Augustus shared by Aeneas, Stahl lists, "a just cause; executor of a divine mission; administrator of the nation's interests; facing irresponsible, godless, and criminal factionalism" (p. 175).

completion<sup>82</sup> and implemented its publication despite the deceased author's hesitancy on account of its incomplete state.<sup>83</sup>

The influence of the acclaimed *Aeneid* spread across the empire and, with its success, *pietas* accrued further prominence as a virtue associated with Rome's foundational epic and imperial authority even into the second century C.E. The Latin poet Propertius had hailed the poem as a masterpiece greater than the *Iliad* even while it was being composed.<sup>84</sup> Generations of students were introduced to the poem and its pious hero, when the *Aeneid* was introduced into the curriculum of grammar students<sup>85</sup> and translated into Greek,<sup>86</sup> becoming a literary standard and classic. The *Aeneid's* position as a classic within Roman literature is further evidenced by the number of Greco-Roman poets who would amend, echo, and even subvert elements of the *Aeneid's* genre, style, and tropes, including *pietas*, in their

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<sup>82</sup> Such anticipation is evidenced in a series of letters Augustus wrote to Virgil between 27–24 B.C.E. that have been preserved through the Roman biographer Suetonius and the fourth century grammarian Aelius Donatus, see *Vita Suetonii vulgo Donatiana* (VSD), 31. In this letter, Augustus entreats Virgil, “send me your first sketch of the *Aeneid*, or whatever swatch of it you will” (trans. Wilson-Okamura, in Jan M. Ziolkowski and Michael C. J. Putnam, eds., *The Virgilian Tradition: The First Fifteen Hundred Years* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008]).

<sup>83</sup> See VSD 39; Servius (Thilo-Hagen 1:2).

<sup>84</sup> Propertius, *Elegies* 2.34.66 (G. P. Goold, LCL) and VSD 30; see also Ovid, *Ars* 3.337–38, who describes the *Aeneid* as the most famous work in Latin (*quo nullum Latium clarius extat opus*) and Velleius Paterculus, a partisan historian under Tiberius, who describes Virgil as “the most important poet in our age...the prince of poets” (*maxime nostri aevi eminent princeps carminum*) (Paterculus, *Hist. rom.* 2.36.3)

<sup>85</sup> See Seneca, *Ep.* 58.5, who while referring to his time in the classroom of the *grammaticus*, describes Virgil's works as being explored daily; Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.8.5, Juvenal, *Satires* 7.225–27.

<sup>86</sup> Polybius, a freedman of the emperor Claudius, did so in the early mid-first century C.E.; see Seneca, *Dial.* 11.8.2.

own epic works.<sup>87</sup> Images from the *Aeneid*, especially the iconic scene of Aeneas carrying his father and his gods out of Troy, proliferated upon engraved reliefs, painted frescoes,<sup>88</sup> and even wall graffiti.<sup>89</sup> Augustus also included such a statue of pious Aeneas, fleeing Troy with his family and gods, among a series of statues representing the *gens Iulia* along the western wing of his forum in Rome.<sup>90</sup> And so, given the proliferation of *pious Aeneas* in texts and images still extant in the second century C.E., it is probable that the author and audiences of the Pastoral Epistles would have been familiar with this poetic trope, which signified the piety inherent within imperial authority, both that of Augustus and of his heirs.

And so, within the scope of Augustan propaganda, one of the essential functions of the association of *pietas* with the character, household, and

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<sup>87</sup> For example, Lucan, a Roman poet writing under the Emperor Nero, composed the *Civil War*, the so-called “anti-*Aeneid*,” which depicts Julius Caesar’s defeat of Pompey at Pharsalia as having compromised the integrity of Rome’s *pietas*. While Caesar’s troops initially hold *pietas* toward their country and gods (*pietas patriique penates*) and hesitate to enter such an impious battle against their own kinsmen, *pietas* is eventually trumped by their lust for battle and fear of Caesar. For an introduction to Lucan’s notably complex relation to Virgil’s *Aeneid*, see Sergio Casali, “The *Belle Civile* as an Anti-*Aeneid*,” in *Brill’s Companion to Lucan*, ed. Paolo Asso (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 81–110. See also James D. Garrison, *Pietas from Vergil to Dryden* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 61–87, who traces the fundamental conflict between *furor* (madness/rage) and *pietas*, as established in Virgil’s *Aeneid*, as it plays out throughout the literature of the so-called Silver Age (and beyond to Augustine) in the way in which Romans optimistically or pessimistically locate the presence of *pietas* in their own age or a virtue long remiss. See also Marianne P. Bonz’s overview of the numerous literary works of the first century C.E. that respond to Virgil’s *Aeneid*, including Lucan’s *On the Civil War*, Statius’s *Thebaid*, Valerius Flaccus’s *Argonautica*, and Silius Italicus’s *Punica*; Bonz, *The Past as Legacy: Luke-Acts and Ancient Epic* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000).

<sup>88</sup> See Zanker, *Power of Images*, 209.

<sup>89</sup> Graffiti referencing passages from Virgil’s *Eclogues* and *Aeneid* have been discovered upon the walls of Pompeii, which attest the pervasiveness and popularity of Virgil’s poems as well as “the effectiveness of the Roman system of education, which so quickly made the verses of Virgil like a song one cannot get out of one’s head” (Ziolkowski and Putnam, *The Virgilian Tradition*, 43; see pp. 42–44 for their treatment and listing of the Pompeian graffiti).

<sup>90</sup> See Ovid, *Fast.* 5.533–78; Zanker, *Power of Images*, 113, 201–210.

responsibilities of Augustus was to justify and naturalize the emperor's authority. Augustus's reign was not that of an arbitrary tyrant whose opportunistic authority was established by political and military power. Rather, Augustus is a fatherly and priestly figure whose exemplary *pietas* toward the gods, nation, and family was destined to rejuvenate Rome's favor with the gods and strengthen Roman families, which in turn, would secure peace and prosperity within the nation. Through their own munificent benefaction toward temples and families and their promotion of their piety (*Pietas Augusti*) upon coins, I suggest that Trajan and Hadrian either appropriate or, at least, could be interpreted as referencing, an essential motif of Augustan propaganda.<sup>91</sup> Such rhetoric of *pietas* within the propaganda of Trajan and Hadrian functioned to associate their reigns with Augustus's own ideological vision of Rome's restoration and prosperity, which depended upon *pietas*. And indeed, comparisons between these emperor's reigns could be made. According to Pliny, the provisions, security, and freedom that Trajan's pious attention to Roman families guaranteed was more effective at encouraging marriage and families, especially among the poor, than Augustus's marriage legislation (*Pan.* 27.1–2). Additionally, Trajan and Hadrian could be interpreted as following Augustus's precedent in their expansions of his occasional financial assistance (*congiaria*) to the poor. According to Laura Nasrallah, the grandiose Forum of Trajan, which was completed by Hadrian, "makes an explicit link between Trajan's rule and Augustus's *pietas* and

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<sup>91</sup> Anthony R. Birley demonstrates that Hadrian sought to fashion himself as a "New Augustus," in Birley, *Hadrian: The Restless Emperor* (London: Routledge, 1997), 142–150. See also, Rawson, "Children as Cultural Symbols," 23: "Trajanic ideology might seem to be inspired by that of Augustus, not only in the exploitation of the role of *pater patriae* but also in the use of legislation and art."



*pax*,” through its juxtaposition to and imitation of the architectural proportions of Augustus’s Forum.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore, the promotion of the virtues, including *pietas*, of the women of Trajan’s and Hadrian’s household functioned to assure Roman and provincial subjects that the *mos maiorum* restored by Augustus were preserved within their successive reigns.<sup>93</sup> The rhetoric of *pietas* then within the propaganda and praise of the virtues of the households of Trajan and Hadrian then could signal to Roman and provincial subjects that Augustus’s golden age of morality and prosperity for the home and empire had returned once again. *Pietas* within the house and among the nation could flourish once again, because of the *pious* rule and household of the emperor.

It should be clear now that claims to *pietas* had become a well-established rhetorical trope within the domain of imperial representations of the emperor’s authority and character during the period in which the Pastoral Epistles were composed and received. How then might we reconsider the rhetorical work and effect of 1 Timothy’s appeals to piety differently in light of the political and social *gravitas* given to *pietas*? In the next chapter, I will examine how the author of 1 Timothy’s rhetoric of piety is indicative of the author’s own engagement with Roman imperial authority and culture. As I shall soon detail, the author of 1 Timothy

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<sup>92</sup> Nasrallah, *Christian Responses to Roman Art and Architecture*, 155.

<sup>93</sup> As Mary Rose D’Angelo has noted, such a political strategy had also been adopted by Tiberius, who minted a coin of his mother Livia as *Pietas*, as well as the Flavian dynasty, during which Domitia, the wife of Domitian, was also represented as *Pietas* (“Εὐσέβεια,” 144–45). For Livia as *Pietas* during the reign of Tiberius, see *BMCRE* I 98, p. 133; this coin type was also reinstituted under Titus to signify a continuity between the Livia’s pious posture toward Augustus’s legacy after his death and that of his own, see *RIC* II.1.426, p. 227. For Domitia, see *RIC* II.1.156, pg. 276 (rev. *Pietas*, seated, with scepter in hand and reaching out to a child; *PIETAS AUGUST*).

strategically negotiates a Christian identity in his representation of an ideal and orthodox *ekklēsia* that embodies the social values esteemed within Roman imperial culture. However, this portrait of the rhetoric of *pietas* within the imperial situation of the Roman Empire would be incomplete without turning to the ways in which claims about piety intersected with elite discourses about the constitution of Roman identity in relation to constructions of foreign superstitions. Indeed, as we shall see, there was much at stake with whether or not Christians were perceived as practicing foreign superstition that threatened the *mos maiorum* supported within the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian.

#### **THE CONSTRUCTION AND NEGOTIATION OF ROMAN PIETY AND FOREIGN SUPERSTITION**

Beyond claims made about the *pietas* associated with the imperial household, *pietas* was often depicted as the distinctive quality that marked the Roman people as an exemplary, if not superior race over against other nations of the world. Literature written under the shadow of Roman domination often portrayed Romans as exceptionally favored by the gods, which explained their imperial sovereignty. For example, Diodorus Siculus, writing during the twilight of the Republic, explains that the Romans enjoy “the active support of the gods in all their undertakings,” because they only engage in just wars.<sup>94</sup> Such explanations of Roman exceptionalism and imperialism intersected with ethnographic accounts of neighboring peoples. Roman

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<sup>94</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 28.3 (Walton, LCL). See also Propertius, who composed poetry around 23 B.C.E. and wrote, “...our power is established by loyalty as much as weapons (*quantum ferro tantum pietare potentes stamus*); *Eleg.* 3.22.21.

ethnography often depicted foreign social and ritual practices as effeminate, luxurious, superstitious (*superstitio*), and dangerous to Rome's ancestral traditions (*mores maiorum*).<sup>95</sup> Because of this perceived threat to what constituted proper Romanness (*romanitas*), boundaries between Roman and foreign entities were policed by authorities and citizens alike through such varying social controls as prohibitive decrees from the Senate (*senatus consulta*), expulsion, conscription, and the perpetuation of prejudicial stereotypes and rumors. Yet however much some elite Romans attempted to police their constructed ethnic and cultural borders, numerous Roman citizens and subjects alike contested, crossed, and even redrew these boundaries anew over time. Thus, in order to understand the rhetoric of *pietas* in relation to Roman identity, one must also attend to its distinguished place within elite Roman discourse about Roman identity and its polemical inverse, *superstitio*, as applied to non-Roman foreigners.

Within this cultural context, Jews and Christians were depicted in elite Roman literature of the early second-century C.E. as practitioners of a foreign superstition, labeled atheists, and were associated with nefarious and anti-social vices. Both groups were portrayed as threatening Roman identity to the extent that they disrupted their converts' relationship to Rome's ancestral tradition. In this final section, I will briefly detail Rome's complicated relationship with and limited tolerance for foreign cults in order to better construct the imperial situation of the

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<sup>95</sup> On the rhetorical intersection between the constructions of ethnicity, gender, and immorality (including luxury) within elite Roman discourse, see esp. Kristi Upson-Saia, *Early Christian Dress: Gender, Virtue, and Authority* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 15–32. On the constructive nature and historical development of the ancient conception of “superstition”—*δαισιδαιμονία* in Greek and *superstitio* in Latin, see Dale B. Martin, *Inventing Superstition: From Hippocrates to the Christians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

Pastoral Epistles. By understanding the complicated prejudices and suspicions of some elite Romans, including Pliny, Suetonius, and Tacitus, against Jews and Christians *qua* foreign superstitions, I suggest, we can better understand the Pastoral Epistles' display of traditional Roman family values as *pietas* and *pudicitia* as negotiating its imperial situation, which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

### Rome's Superior Piety and Empire

Ancient historiographers and orators including Cicero, Livy, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus evidence an elite Roman discourse that explained Rome's imperial sovereignty on the basis of their exceptional devotion to the gods which distinguished them over others nations.<sup>96</sup> In 56 B.C.E., Cicero delivered a speech, *On the Responses of the Haruspices*, to the Roman Senate, in which he states, while reflecting upon the self-evident relationship between Rome and its patron gods:

Or who, once convinced that divinity does exist, can fail at the same time to be convinced that it is by its power that this great empire has been created, extended, and sustained? However good be our conceit of ourselves, conscript fathers, we have excelled neither Spain in population, nor Gaul in vigour, nor Carthage in versatility, nor Greece in art, nor indeed Italy and Latium itself in the innate sensibility characteristic of this land and its peoples; but in piety, in devotion to religion (*sed pietate ac religione*), and in that special wisdom which consists in the recognition of the truth that the world is swayed and directed by divine disposal, we have excelled every race and every nation (*omnis gentis nationesque superavimus*).<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> See also the second-century B.C.E. Greek historiographer, Polybius, who regards Rome's "conviction about the gods" (τῇ περὶ θεῶν διαλήψει) as its distinctive mark of superiority over against the Carthaginians (*Hist.* 6.56.). However, for Polybius, Rome's *religio* did not so much secure Rome's divine election or preference among the gods, but was instrumental in establishing social cohesion.

<sup>97</sup> Cicero, *Har. resp.* 9.19 (Watts, LCL). See also Pliny, *Pan.* 74.4 (Radice, LCL): "And so this city which has always shown its devotion to religion (*religionibus dedita*) and earned through piety (*pie*) the

According to Cicero, while other nations might excel in particular qualities suited for empire building, it is Rome's exceptional piety that has made her worthy of rule.<sup>98</sup>

Livy, writing around 27–25 B.C.E., assumes this sentiment as well, when he describes the military virtue of the infamous Carthaginian general, Hannibal, as matched by his “monstrous vices” (*ingentia vitia*). Livy adds, “his perfidy worse than Punic; he had no regard for truth, and none for sanctity (*sancti*), no fear of the gods (*deum metus*), no reverence for an oath, no religious scruple (*religio*).”<sup>99</sup> Through their virtue and scrupulous attention to ritual detail, the Romans endeared themselves to the gods whose favor helped to establish Rome's imperial domination.<sup>100</sup> Virgil reinscribes this ideology when he portrays Jupiter prophesying over the identity and mission of the Romans, “For these I set no bounds in space or time; but have given empire without end.”<sup>101</sup> Jupiter goes on to describe the Romans as the “lords of the world and the nation of the toga”,<sup>102</sup> thus signaling Rome's divinely ordained mission to establish peace and civilization among the barbarians, in so far as the toga signified cultured civility.<sup>103</sup> As Henriette van der Blom notes, “[t]his identity

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gracious favour of the gods has only one thought for the completion of its happiness: the gods must follow where Caesar shows the way.”

<sup>98</sup> See Horace, *Carm.* 3.6.5–6 (quoted above, note 46).

<sup>99</sup> Livy, *Urb. cond.* 21.4 (Foster, LCL). Cf. 21.21, where Hannibal does discharge his vows to Hercules and is momentarily rewarded with successes; see D. S. Levene, *Religion in Livy* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 44–7.

<sup>100</sup> See Livy, *Urb. cond.* 1.9; 6.41; 7.10; 36.17; 44.1.

<sup>101</sup> Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.278–79 (Fairclough; Goold; LCL).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.282.

<sup>103</sup> On the civilizing mission of Rome, see Leo G. Perdue and Warren Carter, *Israel and Empire: A Postcolonial History of Israel and Early Judaism*, ed. Coleman A. Baker (London: Bloomsbury, 2015),

included not only a self-understanding, but also a responsibility for all Romans to live up to the ancestors, thereby keeping the gods on their side and the empire safe.”<sup>104</sup> The cultural prevalence of this representation of Roman identity is suggested by its sustained evocation even in the third century C.E. with the Greek rhetorician, Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Dionysius describes Rome’s “reverence toward the gods” (εὐλαβῶς...τὰ περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς) as superior to that of the Greeks and the barbarians.<sup>105</sup>

### Foreign Cults in Roman Ideology

While an elite Roman discourse may have maintained that Rome’s superior *pietas* and *religio* distinguished itself from foreign and conquered nations, the status of foreign cults within Roman ideology remained complex and contested. Over the past decade, scholars analyzing elite Roman representations of foreigners and the history of Roman religion have demonstrated that the Romans had no simple or consistent response to non-Roman cult practices. Romans could variably consider alien ritual practices and conceptions of the divine as either supportive or

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227–35, esp. 229; see also, Caroline Vout, “The Myth of the Toga: Understanding the History of Roman Dress,” *Greece and Rome* 43 (1996): 204–20.

<sup>104</sup> van der Blom, *Cicero’s Role Models*, 14. See also her bibliographic references concerning how early Roman historians shaped Roman identity through references to ancestral customs and piety, *ibid.*, 14 n. 7.

<sup>105</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 2.19.2–3; see also *Ant. Rom.* 1.4.2; 1.5.3 (Cary, LCL): “Rome from the very beginning, immediately after its founding, produced infinite examples of virtue in men whose superiors, whether for piety or for justice or for life-long self-control or for warlike valour (οὐτ’ εὐσεβεστέρους οὔτε δικαιότερους οὔτε σωφροσύνη...κρείττους ἀγωνιστὰς), no city, either Greek or barbarian, has ever produced.”

threatening to Roman *mores* and social order.<sup>106</sup> For example, according to legend, the Sibylline Oracles, which were profoundly important for Roman prophecy, were purchased from a mysterious foreign woman.<sup>107</sup> Upon consulting these prophetic books during times of desperate peril in the third century B.C.E., the Roman state sent official delegations to foreign lands in order to request the assistance of their native divinities, including the Greek Aesculapius,<sup>108</sup> the Sicilian Venus Erycina,<sup>109</sup> and the Phrygian Cybele or “the Great Mother” (*Magna Mater*).<sup>110</sup> Roman generals might even request the support of their enemies’ gods, like Juno of the Etruscan city of Veii, in the ritual ceremony of *evocatio*.<sup>111</sup> In exchange for their aid, the Romans dedicated new temples to these foreign gods in and around Rome.<sup>112</sup> And through the practice of *interpretatio Romana*, Roman ethnographers and historians could

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<sup>106</sup> See Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, eds., *Religions of Rome: Volume 1: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

<sup>107</sup> Dionysius Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 4.62; see Eric Orlin, *Foreign Cults in Rome: Creating a Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 202–3.

<sup>108</sup> Livy, *Urb. cond.* 10.47.6–7; Valerius Maximus 1.8.2.

<sup>109</sup> Livy, *Urb. cond.* 22.9–10, 23.30–31.

<sup>110</sup> Livy, *Urb. cond.* 29.10.4–11.8; Ovid *Fast.* 4.247–348; Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 347–48; Mary Beard, “The Roman and the Foreign: The Cult of the ‘Great Mother’ in Imperial Rome,” in *Shamanism, History, and the State*, ed. Nicholas Thomas and Caroline Humphrey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 164–190.

<sup>111</sup> Livy, *Urb. cond.* 5.21.1–7; 22.3–7; Pliny *Nat. hist.* 28.4.18; Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 34–35.

<sup>112</sup> A temple was constructed for Aesculapius upon Tiber Island, just outside of Rome’s boundary. According to tradition, this location was chosen by Aesculapius himself, who in the form of a snake, had boarded the delegation’s ship from his native land of Epidaurus and, upon arrival to Rome, disembarked to a small island on the Tiber. Venus Erycina received a new shrine on the Capitoline Hill, while Cybele’s temple was constructed on the Palatine Hill. The Etruscan Juno was given a temple upon the Aventine Hill, with the new title, Juno Regina.

even identify aspects or powers associated with their own native gods as present within foreign divinities.<sup>113</sup> For example, the Roman historian Tacitus, writing in the early second-century C.E., observes that within the distant land of the Nahanarvali the divine brothers Castor and Pollux are worshiped, “without any trace of foreign superstition (*nullum peregrinae superstitionis vestigium*).”<sup>114</sup> Tacitus’s account shows that it was even possible for Romans to perceive barbarians from the farthest reaches of the known world as possessing a non-barbarian piety in accordance with the established Roman understanding of the divine.<sup>115</sup>

On the other hand, it was commonplace within elite Roman discourse to ridicule ethnic groups for their ritual customs, which were assumed to be characteristic of their deficient ethnic traits. Egyptians were especially derided for their absurd depiction and association of the divine with animals, most notably the sacred bull, Apis.<sup>116</sup> Cicero’s assessment is characteristic: “Who does not know of the custom (*morem*) of the Egyptians? Their minds are infected with depraved errors (*pravitatis erroribus*) and they would sooner submit to any torment than injure an ibis or asp or cat or dog or crocodile.”<sup>117</sup> The prolific satirist Lucian of Samasota, writing in the mid-second century C.E., lampoons the Egyptians as “the most

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<sup>113</sup> See James B. Rives, “Roman Translation: Tacitus and Ethnographic Interpretation,” in *Travel and Religion in Antiquity*, ed. Philip A. Harland (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 165–83; see also Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 317; Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 214.

<sup>114</sup> Tacitus, *Germ.* 43.3. See also, Caesar, *Bell. gall.* 6.17.

<sup>115</sup> So also, Martin, *Inventing Superstition*, 133–34.

<sup>116</sup> See K. A. D. Smelik and E. A. Hemelrijk, “Egyptian Animal Worship in Antiquity,” *ANRW* 17.4: 1852–2000.

<sup>117</sup> Cicero, *Tusc.* 5.78 (King, LCL, with my own modification). See also, Cicero, *Nat. d.* 81–82.



superstitious (δεισιδαιμονέστατοι) of all people.”<sup>118</sup> In the Roman poet Juvenal’s sixth satire (ca. late first or early second century C.E.), the poet depicts the rituals of barbarians as licentious and ridiculous, including those of the Egyptians and Jews. Juvenal adds that such cults are particularly attractive to gullible and promiscuous women and therefore are effeminate.<sup>119</sup> Additionally, the Egyptian cult of Isis was believed to justify the marriages between siblings as well as women holding a place of authority over their husbands in line with Isis’s own superiority over her husband-brother Osiris.<sup>120</sup> According to Juvenal, the exotic and backward practices of certain nations not only made a mockery of the divine, but also threatened the established gendered *mores maiorum*.

Not only could foreign cults be perceived to detract Romans from their dutiful observance of rituals rooted in their own ancestral customs,<sup>121</sup> but more

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<sup>118</sup> Lucian, *Pro. imag.* 27.

<sup>119</sup> Juvenal, *Sat.* 6.508–91. See also Plutarch *Conj. praec.* 140D, where Plutarch portrays women as particularly vulnerable to foreign superstitions (ξέναις δεισιδαιμονίας); Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 299–300. On the literary *topos* of the gullibility of women in antiquity, particularly in matters pertaining to foreign religion, see Shelly Matthews, *First Converts: Rich Pagan Women and the Rhetoric of Mission in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001). Matthews also argues that for texts like Josephus, Philo, and Luke-Acts, the presence of supportive high-standing women served a useful apologetic strategy of demonstrating the compatibility of Judaism and Christianity with the Greco-Roman culture.

<sup>120</sup> See esp. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. his.* 1.27.1–2 (Oldfather, LCL): “The Egyptians also made a law, they say, contrary to the general custom of mankind, permitting men to marry their sisters, this being due to the success attained by Isis in this respect; for she had married her brother Osiris, and upon his death, having taken a vow never to marry another man, she both avenged the murder of her husband and reigned all her days over the land with complete respect for the laws, and, in a word, became the cause of more and greater blessings to all men than any other. It is for these reasons, in fact, that it was ordained that the queen should have greater power and honour than the king and that among private persons the wife should enjoy authority over her husband, the husbands agreeing in the marriage contract that they will be obedient in all things to their wives.” See also David L. Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1981), 69–73.

<sup>121</sup> These sentiments can be found in Livy, *Urb. cond.* 39:16 (Sage, LCL): “For men wisest in all divine and human law used to judge that nothing was so potent in destroying religion (*religionis*) as where

poignantly, foreign cult gatherings were sometimes suspected of fostering sedition to the Roman state and social order,<sup>122</sup> especially with respect to feminine modesty.<sup>123</sup> As I shall show below, such perceived anti-social behavior could be met with public aversion, state control, and the occasional suppression of the foreign cults. One of the most notorious cases of social disturbances attributed to the influx of foreign superstition that resulted in state suppression was that of Bacchanalia festivities in 186 B.C.E. According to Livy's account, such a "depraved religion" (*prava religio*)<sup>124</sup> spread like a "contagious disease" (*contagion morbi*).<sup>125</sup> Livy depicts this cult as largely attracting women and consisting of nocturnal gatherings filled with frenzied dance, debauchery, and sexual license—all activities inappropriate for the modest Roman matron.<sup>126</sup> Because these Bacchic gatherings seem to have maintained a highly structured organization, Roman senators were concerned that the cult served as a site for criminal activities and conspiracies against the state.<sup>127</sup>

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sacrifices were performed, not by native, but by foreign, ritual (*externo ritu*)." According to Plutarch (*Superst.* 166B), even the very use of barbarian phrases and names in prayer disgraces and transgresses "the divine and ancestral dignity of piety" (τὸ θεῖον καὶ πάτριον ἄξίωμα τῆς εὐσεβείας).

<sup>122</sup> Martin observes that among Latin sources "*superstitio* regularly carries connotations of political danger" (*Inventing Superstition*, 131). See Martin, *Inventing Superstition*, 130–35, for his discussion on whether *superstitio* was connected to foreigners and then associated with sedition or visa-versa.

<sup>123</sup> For a general overview on the connection between promiscuity among women and foreign religions in Greek and Roman literature, see Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive*, 65–80.

<sup>124</sup> Livy, *Urb. cond.* 39.16.6.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.9.1.

<sup>126</sup> Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 92–6.

<sup>127</sup> Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 95; see also J. A. North, "Religious Toleration in Republican Rome," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 25 (1979): 85–103. See Livy, *Urb. cond.* 39.16.1–3 (Sage, LCL): "Yet it would be less serious if their wrongdoing had merely made them effeminate...and if they had kept their hands from crime and their thoughts from evil designs:

In order to stymie any potential threat, the senate passed a decree criminalizing the cult,<sup>128</sup> which according to Livy, resulted in the deaths and confiscation of property of thousands of Romans.<sup>129</sup> Regardless of the actual historicity behind Livy's account, the Bacchanalia episode established not only a ready caricature of dangerous foreign cults,<sup>130</sup> but also a precedent for state sponsored suppression of superstition.<sup>131</sup> In 28 B.C.E. Augustus banned the practice of Egyptian rites of Isis and Sarapis to be conducted within Rome's *pomerium*, providing funds for their temples to be relocated just outside this sacred boundary.<sup>132</sup> According to Eric Orlin, "The insistence on moving the shrines of Isis and Sarapis outside the *pomerium* marked these cults as non-Roman, as Augustus apparently invented a tradition that foreign

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never has there been so much evil in the state nor affecting so many people in so many ways. Whatever villainy there has been in recent years due to lust, whatever to fraud, whatever to crime, I tell you, has arisen from this one cult. Not yet have they revealed all the crimes to which they have conspired. Their impious (*impia*) compact still limits itself to private crimes, since as yet it does not have strength enough to crush the state."

<sup>128</sup> For the actual decree, see *ILS* 18 (Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 92).

<sup>129</sup> Livy, *Urb. cond.* 39.17.

<sup>130</sup> This story was also included among Valerius Maximus's numerous examples of foreign cults rejected by Romans in his collection of useful anecdotes for rhetoricians (*idem.*, 1.3).

<sup>131</sup> John Granger Cook, *Roman Attitudes Toward the Christians: From Claudius to Hadrian*, WUNT 261 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 53–4.

<sup>132</sup> Cassius Dio, *His. rom.* 53.2.4; see also 54.6.6. According to Suetonius (*Aug.* 93), Augustus held all foreign cults with contempt, except those foreign rites that were "ancient and well established" (*veteres ac praeceptas*), which he treated with "great reverence" (*reverentissime*). While Augustus upheld the dignity of Attic Ceres (*Magna Mater*) as well as Jewish rites, he had no time for Egypt's sacred bull, the great Apis (*Aug.* 93). According to Dio Cassius, Augustus followed the advice of his friend Maecenas, who warned against allowing Romans to adopt foreign rites, which not only distort Roman rites, but also foster conspiracies, factions, and cabals (συνωμοσίαι καὶ συστάσεις ἑταιρεαί τε), which are far from profitable to a monarchy" (*His. rom.* 52.36.2). Of course, Augustus's opinion of Egyptian cults cannot be understood apart from his antagonism against Anthony and Cleopatra, who represented themselves as the "young Dionysius" and the "new Isis," respectively (see Dio Cassius, *His. rom.* 48.39.2; 50.24.1, 25.3–4, 27.7; Plutarch, *Ant.* 54.9).

cults should be located outside that religious boundary.”<sup>133</sup>

Successive emperors including Tiberius,<sup>134</sup> Claudius,<sup>135</sup> and Hadrian<sup>136</sup> would take similar measures of purging Rome of foreign cults deemed threatening to Roman traditions by prohibiting their assemblies, especially those dedicated to the Egyptian Isis and the Jewish god.<sup>137</sup> Excessive superstition was even policed among the elite themselves. Roman citizens, in principal, could prosecute one another on the grounds of participating in foreign superstitions (*superstitionis externae*), as the case of Pomponia Graecina suggests.<sup>138</sup> Even Domitian’s own relatives, the consul Flavius Clemens and Flavia Domitilla, were not safe from “the accusation of atheism” (ἔγκλημα ἀθεότητος), “a charge,” Dio Cassius elaborates, “on which many others

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<sup>133</sup> Orlin, *Foreign Cults*, 211. See also Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 180. Orlin argues that Augustus’s financial support of these shrine’s relocation demonstrates Rome’s sustained openness toward foreign cultural elements, see also Orlin, “Octavian and Egyptian Cults: Redrawing the Boundaries of Romanness,” *AJP* 129.2 (2008): 231–53.

<sup>134</sup> Apparently, Augustus’s proscription against Egyptian cults was neither thorough nor lasting, as Tiberius also finds it imperative to abolish foreign ceremonies (*externae caerimoniae*), including both Egyptian and Jewish rites. Suetonius classifies the ritual practices of both groups as superstition (*superstitio*). Jews of military age were conscripted into the army and relocated across Rome’s provinces (Suetonius, *Tib.* 36).

<sup>135</sup> According to Tacitus (*Ann.* 11.15), Claudius appealed to the senate to resolve upon charging the pontiffs with better observance of the traditional haruspices, which had been ill-attended due to the growth of “foreign superstitions” (*externae superstitiones*). Claudius also banned Jewish assemblies from Rome for a short time (Josephus, *A.J.* 18.65–84).

<sup>136</sup> Hadrian, like Augustus, despised foreign cults but was scrupulous toward Roman rites (*Hist. aug. Hadrian* 22.9–10).

<sup>137</sup> Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 228–9. Such measures also took place during the Republic. During the years 59 to 48 B.C.E., the Egyptian cults Sarapis, Isis, Harpocrates, and Anubis were banned from the Capital by the Senate and their altars destroyed (Varro, *CIL* VI.2247; Dio Cassius, *Hist. rom.* 40.47; 42.26). However, the recurrence of such bans demonstrates the persistence of their popularity among the people (Orlin, *Foreign Cults*, 204–5; cf. Tertullian, *Nat.* 10).

<sup>138</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.* 13.32; During the reign of Nero, Pomponia Graecina was charged with practicing foreign superstitions (*superstitionis externae rea*) upon her return from Britain, however, she was eventually found innocent of all charges by her husband. Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome*, 229; Isaac, *Invention of Racism*, 466.

who drifted into Jewish ways (τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἥθη) were condemned.”<sup>139</sup> The mere semblance of practicing a foreign superstition was enough reason for the first-century C.E. Roman Stoic Seneca to abandon his abstinence from meat lest he be expelled from Rome during the reign of Tiberius.<sup>140</sup>

Even for the state sponsored cult of Magna Mater there existed an unresolved tension among Roman elites about the ‘Romanness’ of some of the cultic practices of the goddess’ adherents. Many Romans critiqued the excessive and foreign nature of the ritual castration of the goddess’ priests, the *galli*.<sup>141</sup> The Roman state forbade native-born Romans to participate in such effeminate Phrygian rites and limited the activity and procession of the *galli*.<sup>142</sup> Instead Romans were to organize sacrifices and festivities (*ludi*) in the goddess’ honor, which accorded with traditional Roman forms of worship.<sup>143</sup>

While the Roman state’s openness toward religious syncretism and extension of citizenship to conquered peoples proved to be effective strategies of colonial

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<sup>139</sup> Cassius Dio, *His. rom* 67.14 (Cary, LCL); Acts 16:19–22. It is important to note that the charge of treason against the majesty of the emperor (*crimen maiestatis*) was likely a pretext for a deeper suspicion of conspiracy directed toward Domitian’s inner circle, see Suetonius, *Dom.* 15.1.

<sup>140</sup> Seneca, *Ep.* 108.22. Seneca took up this practice on account of his adherence to a school of philosophy established by Q. Sextius which mixed both elements and practices of Stoicism and Pythagorean thought—the abstinence from meat comes from the latter (see *Ep.* 108.17–21).

<sup>141</sup> Juvenal, *Sat.* 6.511–16; Lucretius, *Rer. nat.* 2.610–28; Ovid, *Fast.* 4.179–88; Seneca, *Vit. beat.* 26.8; Beard, “The Roman and the Foreign,” 164–90.

<sup>142</sup> Dionysius Halicarnassus, *Rom. ant.* 2.19; in the second century C.E., Hadrian forbade the castration of any native Roman (Justinian *Dig.* 48.8.4–6).

<sup>143</sup> Eric Orlin, “Urban Religion in the Middle and Late Republic,” in *A Companion to Roman Religion*, ed. Jörg Rüpke (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 63–5.

domination and imperial expansion,<sup>144</sup> such policies also perpetuated debate over what constituted Rome's cultural identity. Rome at its core, Mary Beard argues, harbored a "dark uncertainty about its own cultural, religious, and political identity."<sup>145</sup> Beard continues,

There was a necessary and unresolved tension between, on the one hand, a sense of specific identity in the city of Rome, with its language, traditions, political inheritance, and religious forms, and on the other, a baffling erosion of that identity as political privileges were shared with the outside, as the literary and artistic traditions of the Greek world came to inform Roman expression, and as Roman religious symbols merged with strange foreign cults and ritual practices. What was it to be Roman in any definable sense, when Rome was synonymous with the world?<sup>146</sup>

Within this cultural tension we can locate divisive orations around what constitutes Greek identity associated with the broad cultural movement of the Second Sophistic in the late first and second centuries C.E.<sup>147</sup> As Greek literary and cultural education (παιδεία) became associated with elite status and Roman sophistication, disputations and rivalries arose contesting social competitors' claims to authentic "Greekness" in ethnicity and intellectual acumen. Imperial subjects of Rome negotiated the status of their own ethnic identities through identifying qualities of their culture that aligned with imperial preferences, while distancing themselves from prejudicial characterizations of barbaric cultures. While "barbarian" identity,

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<sup>144</sup> See Richard Gordon, "Religion in the Roman Empire: The Civic Compromise and its Limits," in *Pagan Priests*, 242–44.

<sup>145</sup> Beard, "The Roman and the Foreign," 185.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

<sup>147</sup> See G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); Graham Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London/New York: Routledge, 1993); Tim Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), esp. 91–130; Barbara Borg, ed., *Paideia: The World of the Second Sophistic* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004).

which was the antithesis of Greek and Roman culture, was typically denigrated, some foreign authors including the Syrians Lucian of Samasota<sup>148</sup> and Tatian the Christian apologist.<sup>149</sup> Both authors identified themselves as barbarians precisely to trouble the presumed cultural legitimacy associated with Greekness and Romanness.<sup>150</sup>

### **Jews and Christians as Practitioners of Foreign Superstitions**

Congruent with these general social concerns for defining what constitutes “foreign” and “Roman” identity, elite Roman literature of the first and second-centuries C.E. characterized the customs and rites of Jews and Christians alike as foreign superstitions which threatened Roman *mores* and *pietas*.<sup>151</sup> Of course, such elite perspectives do not represent the perspectives of all Roman subjects. On the contrary, the prejudicial invective that such literature directs at Jews and Christians even suggests that at least some Romans were attracted to these groups. Nevertheless, the similarities that Roman authors including Juvenal, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny share in their prejudices against Jews and Christians evidences

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<sup>148</sup> See Lucian, *Bis acc.* 27; *Pisc.* 10; *Pseudol.* 11; *Scyth.* 9.

<sup>149</sup> See Tatian, *Or.* 1; 29.

<sup>150</sup> See Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature*, 116–29. Cf. Justin, *1 Apol.* 5; 7; 46.

<sup>151</sup> See Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive*, 65–80; Stephen Benko, *Pagan Rome and the Early Christians* (London: Batsford LTD, 1985); Isaac, *Invention of Racism*, 440–491; Gruen, *Rethinking the Other*, 179–96; Cook, *Roman Attitudes*. According to Galerius’s Edict of 311 C.E., the edicts of 303 were launched against Christians with the aim of preserving the ancient law and public discipline (*disciplina*) of the Romans from the corrosive, non-Roman influences of Christians who had abandoned not only a sound mind (*ad bonas mentes*) but the way of life (*sectam*) of their ancestors; see Elizabeth DePalma Digeser, “Religion, Law and the Roman Polity: The Era of the Great Persecution” in *Religion and Law in Classical and Christian Rome*, eds., Clifford Ando and Jörg Rupke, *PAWB* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006), 68–84, esp. 68–70.

the relatively diffuse perspectives that many elites held about these two groups that certainly was not confined to Roman nobility nor intellectuals.

Tacitus characterizes Jewish practices as antithetical to Roman *pietas*. According to Tacitus, those who adopt Jewish practices learn “to despise the gods, to disown their fatherland, and degrade their parents, children, and brothers as worthless.”<sup>152</sup> He describes the “new rites” (*novos ritus*) introduced by Moses as inherently contradictory to Roman rites.<sup>153</sup> Tacitus echoes Juvenal’s offense at Jews, who “being accustomed to despise Roman legislation” (*Romanas...soliti contemnere leges*), revere a Mosaic law that discourages them from assisting non-Jews.<sup>154</sup> Both Josephus and Philo evidence that Tacitus’s negative assessment of Jewish culture also had precedence within the polemic of Alexandrian Greeks and Hellenized Egyptians. Notable among Jewish detractors is the Alexandrian rhetor, Apion, who portrayed Jews as misanthropes who lacked piety and were seditious against the state.<sup>155</sup> It seems that this trained orator proved rather influential among Roman elites during his visit to Rome. At least his critiques were regarded as persuasive enough that Josephus, writing a number of years after Apion’s death, was compelled to address Apion’s critiques at length.

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 5.5: *contemnere deos, exuere patriam parentes liberos fratres vilia habere* (trans. mine).

<sup>153</sup> Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4: “Moses...introduced a form of worship, novel and contrary to the rest of humanity. Everything that we hold to be sacred, is profane for them, while what they allow is forbidden for us” (*Moyses...novos ritus contrariosque ceteris mortalibus indidit. profana illic omnia quae apud nos sacra, rursum concessa apud illos quae nobis incesta*).

<sup>154</sup> Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.100–4. So also Quintilian, who discredits Moses as the founder of a superstition (*superstitio*) and a race of people who are “pernicious to other peoples” (*perniciosam ceteris gentem*) (*Inst.* 3.7.21).

<sup>155</sup> See Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.125.



Christians fare no better than Jews in Tacitus's judgment. Tacitus describes Christians as a class of men (*genus hominum*) infected by the "disease" (*mali*) of "destructive superstition" (*exitiabilis superstitio*), whose hatred for humanity (*odio humani*) has led to the cult's suppression by Roman authorities.<sup>156</sup> As Ramsey MacMullen correctly observes, the charge of Christian misanthropy and anti-sociality, as it did for Jews, stemmed from the withdrawal of numerous Christians from participation in civic life. MacMullen explains,

For most people, to have a good time with their friends involved some contact with a god who served as guest of honor, as master of ceremonies, or as host in the porticoes or flowering, shaded grounds of his dwelling. There existed – it is no great exaggeration to say it of all but the fairly rich – no formal social life in the world of the Apologists [second and third centuries] that was entirely secular.<sup>157</sup>

Tacitus's characterization of Christian rites and practices as a threatening foreign superstition resonates not only with the well known assessments of Suetonius<sup>158</sup> and Pliny,<sup>159</sup> but is also reflected in the characterization of Greek and Roman attitudes toward Christians in early Christian literature. For example, at the conclusion of Eusebius's record of the second-century C.E. martyrs of Lyon (*Hist. eccl.*

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<sup>156</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44.

<sup>157</sup> Ramsey MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 40. See also Martin's assessment: "It is not hard to understand why these authors perceived Christianity as a social and political threat to Roman imperium. Simply the knowledge that Christians followed, worshipped, and heroized a Jew who had been executed in Judea on the charge of treason—for that is precisely the meaning of the inscription 'King of the Jews' that was reportedly placed on Jesus' cross— would be enough to raise suspicions against them" (*Inventing Superstition*, 135).

<sup>158</sup> Suetonius (*Nero* 16.2) describes Christians as "a class of men of a new and nefarious superstition" (*genus hominum superstitionis nouae ac maleficae*).

<sup>159</sup> Upon interrogating two female slaves about the practices of Christians, Pliny reports that he only discovered "a depraved and immoderate superstition" (*superstitionem pravam et immodicam*) (*Ep.* 10.96.8). Pliny, like Livy and Tacitus, also depicts of the superstition of Christians as a disease (*contagio*), one which has spread throughout the cities and countrysides (*Ep.* 10.96.9).

5), the Roman antagonists are portrayed as dismissing the Christian cult (θρησκείαν) as a “foreign and new” (ξένην τινὰ καὶ καινὴν).<sup>160</sup> Late-first and early second-century C.E. Jews and Christians were faced with the task of constructing positive or at very least “passing” identities that might ameliorate tensions and change perceptions of their respective groups as seditious and foreign superstitions.

The Pastoral Epistles’ rhetorical situation is expressly informed by the author’s concern about the public perception of the community among outsiders. Throughout 1 Timothy and Titus, the author repeatedly justifies his admonitions for different members of the *ekklēsia* to maintain their duties appropriate to their station in life by appealing to how outsiders might perceive the legitimacy of the faith. Young widows must remarry and manage their households (1 Tim 5:14), slaves must show proper deference to their masters (1 Tim 6:1–2), and older women must exhibit modesty (σώφρονας) and submission to their husbands (ὑποτασσομένας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν) (Titus 2:5), and young men must practice self-control (σωφρονεῖν) and be models of good works (τύπον καλῶν ἔργων) (Titus 2:6), so that neither the name, teaching, nor word of God might be blasphemed (βλασφημῆται) (1 Tim 6:1; Titus 2:5). Additionally, overseers “must possess a good reputation with outsiders” (δεῖ δὲ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἑξωθεν) (1 Tim 3:7). As Lone Fatum observes:

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<sup>160</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.63; see also Eusebius’s preservation of Porphyry’s description of Christians as “impious” (δυσσεβεῖς) and “atheists” (ἄθεοι) for having “apostatized from the ancestral gods whom each *ethnos* and *polis* has come together” (οἱ τῶν πατρῶων θεῶν ἀποστάντες, δι’ ὧν πᾶν ἔθνος καὶ πᾶσα πόλις συνέστηκεν) (*Praep. ev.* 1.2.1–2), as well as his disdain for Origin’s turn toward barbaric shamelessness (βάρβαρον τόλμημα) (*Hist. eccl.* 6.19.7). Other examples include, Tatian, *Or.* 35; *Ps.-Clem.* 4.7.13; cf. Justin, *1 Apol.* 5; 7; 46.

This gaze from without...motivates the paraenesis of the Pastorals and, accordingly, the public male gaze decides both the end and the means of the author's endeavors, defining, first, his worries of not being respectable to outsiders by not living up to patriarchal patron standard of social conventional values, and, second his choice of the political strategy of institutionalization to protect his church against the slander caused by critical observation.<sup>161</sup>

Hence, the presence or gaze of outsiders haunts the author and plays an influential role in his strategic imitating of terminology and social values at home within imperial propaganda and the broader culture.

At stake for the Pastoral Epistles' rhetorical self-fashioning was the threat of violence that constituted its imperial situation as evidenced by Pliny's famous correspondence with Trajan (*Ep.* 10.96–97; ca. 110 C.E.). During his stint as the governor of the provinces of Bithynia and Pontus in Asia Minor, Pliny wrote to Trajan concerning the matter of prosecuting Christians with the aim of persuading Trajan that he was correct to release those who denied their Christian identity and were able to demonstrate their reverence toward the gods and the emperor.<sup>162</sup> Apparently, Roman citizens and provincial subjects from “every age, social class, and indeed of each sex” (*Ep.* 10.96.9) had been denounced to Pliny as Christians, many through informers or anonymous pamphlets posted in public view (*Ep.* 10.96.5–6), and so had been summoned to trial. Regarding the trial, Pliny writes,

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<sup>161</sup> Fatum, “Christ Domesticated,” 201. See also, Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 369: “The Pastor is very conscious of the outside world and what the wider society thinks of the community. In particular, he is concerned that the community and its teachings should not be discredited in the eyes of outsiders but rather that they should have a respectable reputation and should avoid giving offense to outsiders. It seems likely that the readers share his views, since he regularly mentions not giving offense, but never argues at length that this should be a key motivation for action, but simply assumes that it is.”

<sup>162</sup> See Cook, *Roman Attitudes*, 149: “Pliny clearly hopes that Trajan will agree to a release of the prisoners who are able to give the reliable indications of their Roman faith.”

For the moment this is the line I have taken with all persons brought before me on the charge of being Christians. I have asked them in person if they are Christians, and if they admit it, I repeat the question a second and third time, with a warning of the punishment awaiting them. If they persist, I order them to be led away for execution; for, whatever the nature of their admission, I am convinced that their stubbornness and unshakeable obstinacy ought not to go unpunished. There have been others similarly fanatical who are Roman citizens. I have entered them on the list of persons to be sent to Rome for trial... Among these I considered that I should dismiss any who denied that they were or ever had been Christians when they had repeated after me a formula of invocation to the gods and had made offerings of wine and incense to your statue (which I had ordered to be brought into court for this purpose along with the images of the gods), and furthermore had reviled the name of Christ: none of which things, I understand, any genuine Christian can be induced to do. (*Ep.* 10.96.2–5 [Radice, LCL])

While it is important to emphasize the sporadic nature of the persecution early Christians experienced during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, Pliny's letter demonstrates that Christians nevertheless were aware of the prospect of being summoned to trial on the charge of "the name," that is, of being a "Christian," or the "crimes associated with the name" (*Ep.* 10.96.2; Radice, LCL). Although Pliny does not specify what "crimes" (*flagitia*) Christians are presumed to have committed, Pliny likely has in mind the typical shameful and seditious behaviors typically associated with a "depraved and immoderate superstition" (*superstitionem pravam et immodicam*; *Ep.* 10.96.8)<sup>163</sup> reminiscent of Livy's infamous depiction of the "depraved religion" (*prava religio*) of the Bacchanalia (*Urb. cond.* 39.16.6).<sup>164</sup> Indeed, that Trajan and Pliny may have perceived Christian gatherings as potential sites of

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<sup>163</sup> According to Martin, "[b]y lumping Christianity with all those other foreign "superstitions," Roman leaders and intellectuals were signaling their perception of it as a threat to Roman power"—that is, "politically subversive and socially dangerous" (*Inventing Superstition*, 135).

<sup>164</sup> So also, Benko, *Pagan Rome and Early Christians*, 11–12; cf. Cook, *Roman Attitudes*, 165–66. Perhaps Pliny has assumed that Christians had sworn oaths during their gatherings to steal, banditry, commit adulteries, break promises, or any other wicked deed—the very actions that Christians deny when Pliny interrogates them (*Ep.* 10.96.7).

sedition is evidenced in Pliny's application of Trajan's imperial mandate that forbid associations from formally organizing in order to discourage Christian gatherings (*Ep.* 10.96.7).<sup>165</sup> While this mandate seems to have addressed, in particular, loosely organized professional groups that Trajan feared might foster social unrest, Pliny's turn to this mandate suggests that he and likely other Roman authorities held similar suspicions about Christian assemblies (*ekklēsiai*).<sup>166</sup> As I shall discuss in the next chapter, the Pastoral Epistles were written with an awareness that persecution was a reality for those who seek to live a pious life in Christ (2 Tim. 3:12). Indeed, it is important to note the rhetorical scene in which the author as Paul composes 2 Timothy is a prison cell in Rome. And so, the stakes were high for the Pastoral Epistles' attempts to help outsiders recognize in Christian piety something of their own Roman *pietas*.

In the following chapter I will first examine how the Jewish historian Josephus attempted to confront the pervasive ethnic and religious prejudices against Jewish customs in his appeals to Roman piety. I suggest that both Rome's ideological prejudices against foreign cults and Josephus's emphasis on the central place of piety within his representation of Jewish identity shed light upon the Pastoral Epistles' own rhetorical construction of Christian identity. By analyzing the

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<sup>165</sup> On Trajan's mandates against associations, its precedence among other imperial mandates, and its exceptions and limits, see Philip A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 161–73.

<sup>166</sup> See Cook, *Roman Attitudes*, 214–15. That many voluntary associations remained active during Trajan's rule despite or unaffected by this mandate is evidenced by inscriptions honoring benefactors inscribed during this period; see *ibid.*, 214; Ilias N. Arnaoutoglou, "Roman Law and *collegia* in Asia Minor," *RIDA* 49 (2002), 27–44; cf. Wendy Cotter, "The *collegia* and Roman Law: State Restrictions on Voluntary Associations, 64BCE–200 CE," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson (London: Routledge, 1996), 74–89.

ways in which Josephus's claims to piety and his own deployment of prejudicial assumptions about foreign customs inferior to those pertaining to Jews, we will gain a greater appreciation for the rhetorical aims and effects of the author of the Pastoral Epistles' own claims to piety.

## CONCLUSION

If we are to begin to understand the meaning and function of the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety, we must first appreciate the sheer scope and significance of the place of *pietas* within Roman imperial ideology and elite Roman discourse. Roman *pietas* within the scope of imperial propaganda signified a range of connotations including loyalty and devotion to the gods, emperor, nation, and family. The pliability of *pietas* made it amenable to a variety of political agendas. This quality was applied to emperors to represent them as the true heir of a dynasty or political legacy as well as the restorer and guarantor of divine benevolence on behalf of the Roman people. It was also associated with the modest women of the imperial household, who were portrayed as fulfilling the ideals of devotional loyalty and submission to be imitated by Rome's dutiful matrons.

Under Augustus, with the assistance of Virgil's epic, the *Aeneid*, the virtue became nearly synonymous with the spirit of the Golden Age of the hope for human flourishing and fertility made possible by *pax Augusta* (Augustan peace). Although by no means was *pietas* emphasized consistently throughout the course of imperial

ideology of the first century C.E.,<sup>167</sup> its significance and prevalence never seems lost given that both Trajan and Hadrian so enthusiastically adopt this virtue in their own imperial programs.

In the next chapter, I will examine how the author of the Pastoral Epistles can be read as responding to the imperial ideology in his own appeals to piety, especially in 1 Timothy. The life of piety promoted by the author especially resonates with conventional Roman values in the author's exhortation to the entire *ekklēsia* to pray on behalf of the emperor and to women and slaves, specifically, to fulfill the duties befitting their stations in life. If it can be shown that the author of the Pastoral Epistles does in fact employ language and ideals that resonate with imperial ideology, how then should we interpret the author's rhetorical aims for doing so? What rhetorical function might Roman *pietas* serve within the scope of the Pastoral Epistles' broader socio-political aims?

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<sup>167</sup> On the frequency of in imperial coins, see Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West*, 233–34; 255–56. See also Theodor Ulrich's extensive overview of the use of *pietas* in Roman politics in the first century C.E. after Augustus, in *Pietas (pius) als politischer Begriff*, 49–58.

## Chapter Two

### *Negotiating Imperial Pietas: Pietas from the Household of Caesar to the Household of God*

As we saw in chapter 1, appeals to *pietas* by Roman authors and imperial authorities carried great cultural significance and functioned to legitimate political power and distinguish civilized Roman subjects from impious and superstitious barbarians. In this chapter, I argue that some of the Pastoral Epistles' claims to εὐσέβεια, especially those found within 1 Timothy, would have clearly signaled to ancient audiences an appeal to Roman *pietas*. In particular, 1 Timothy's admonitions for the *ekklēsia* to pray for governing authorities so that they might live a life "in all piety" (ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ; 1 Tim. 2:1–2) and for its women to embody behavior that befits both "piety toward God" (θεοσεβειαν, 1 Tim. 2:10) and "the household of God" (οἶκος θεοῦ; 1 Tim. 3:15), including modesty, deference to men, and childbearing, resonate with obligations toward the divine, the fatherland, and the family that constituted Roman *pietas*. How then might my analysis of elite discourses on *pietas*, which were operative within the literature and political propaganda of the Roman Empire, illuminate the social and political functions of appeals to piety within these passages of 1 Timothy?

Mary Rose D'Angelo and Angela Standhartinger have rightly argued that the Pastoral Epistles' use of εὐσέβεια reflects the imperial propaganda of Trajan and



Hadrian insofar as the epistles promote the fulfillment of duty and devotion to one's household and family.<sup>1</sup> As Standhartinger argues,

Neben Ehrungen und Stiftungen für das Kaiserhaus und dem Ableisten entsprechender Eide äußert sich dieses *pietas* in pflicht- und gesetztreuer Ausübung der Religion und der Anerkennung römischer Gesellschafts- und Familienwerte, die insbesondere von den Räumen des Kaiserhauses exemplarisch verkörpert werden.<sup>2</sup>

Both have located the Pastoral Epistles' use of piety within a broader cultural discourse concerning piety evidenced in some contemporaneous Hellenistic Jewish literature, most notably 4 Maccabees. This Jewish narrative's portrayal of a pious mother with exemplary virtues resonates with the family values of Augustan legislation, the virtues of the imperial households of Trajan and Hadrian, and the Pastoral Epistles. And finally, both scholars have identified the apologetic function of the Pastoral Epistles' appeal to Roman *pietas*. This chapter builds upon the insights of D'Angelo and Standhartinger in its reconstruction of the imperial situation that informed the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety. In addition to Augustus's marriage legislation and the propaganda of Trajan and Hadrian, I contend that the Pastoral Epistles' appeals to *pietas* respond to elite Roman imperial discourses that esteemed *pietas* as a characteristic trait of Roman ethnic identity as

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<sup>1</sup> See D'Angelo, "Εὐσεβεία," 139–65; Standhartinger, "Eusebeia," 51–82. See also Osiek, "PIETAS In and Out of the Frying Pan," 166–72 as well as Lilian Portefaix, "Good Citizenship," 147–58. While Portefaix does not discuss the relationship between imperial legislation and propaganda in terms of piety, she did argue for the relevance of the Augustan legislation on marriage in understanding the Pastorals' instruction toward women.

<sup>2</sup> Standhartinger, "Eusebeia," 76: "In addition to the honors and dedications for the imperial house and the observance of appropriate oaths, this *pietas* manifests itself in a dutiful and law-abiding fulfillment of religion and in the recognition of the Roman social- and family-values, which are exemplarily embodied, in particular, by the women of the imperial family."

well as stigmatized Christians as practicing a malicious and potentially seditious foreign *superstitio*.

Moreover, this chapter explores how the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety served as a strategic tactic of negotiation with its imperial situation. This turn to the language of negotiation, with its indebtedness to postcolonial theory, intends to intervene in interpretations of the Pastoral Epistles that describes its relationship to Roman imperial authority and culture as essentially subversive or capitulating.<sup>3</sup> The language of negotiation, I suggest, is able to hold together resistance and accommodation in its description of the Pastoral Epistles' strategic navigation of its imperial situation with its ambiguous imitation<sup>4</sup> and critique of imperial concepts

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<sup>3</sup> In some important ways, concerns shared among New Testament scholars about whether the Pastoral Epistles' admonition to obey imperial authorities and embody societal gender norms display postures of accommodation or resistance to its surrounding culture are mirrored in classic debates about 1 Peter's similar admonitions. In 1981, two influential monographs were published within months apart from each other that came to radically different conclusions. On the one hand, David L. Balch's work argued that the domestic code in 1 Peter (1 Pet 2:11–3:12) are indicative of the author's deployment of a common Greek philosophical trope on "household management." According to Balch, 1 Peter's admonitions toward women and slaves to obey their husbands and masters, respectively, functioned to disrupt Roman prejudices against Christians as a novel eastern cult posed to undermine Roman social and household customs; see Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive*. In contrast, John H. Elliot argued that the community of 1 Peter was best understood from the sociological category of a "conversionist sect" that resisted any social assimilation with a world perceived to be corrupt; see Elliot, *A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981). See also their debate in Charles H. Talbert, ed., *Perspectives on First Peter* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), 61–101. My own turn to postcolonial theory to advance the discussion surrounding the Pastoral Epistles is preceded by that of David G. Horrell in his own intervention in the Balch-Elliot debate (though our precise language, method, and conclusions differ), see Horrell, "Between Conformity and Resistance: Beyond the Balch-Elliot Debate Towards a Postcolonial Reading of First Peter," in *Reading First Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of First Peter*, ed. Robert L. Webb and Betsy Bauman-Martin, LNTS 364 (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 111–43.

<sup>4</sup> My language of "ambiguous imitation" is informed by Homi Bhabha's concepts of "ambivalence" and "mimicry." However, where Bhabha applies these terms to emphasize difference, resistance, and even mockery operative within the appropriation of colonial discourse and identity markers by the colonized, my language intends to bring out how 1 Timothy employs language and concepts that intersect with imperial discourse as a rhetorical strategy of negotiating its imperial situation. For mimicry as mockery, see Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 165: "The display of hybridity — its peculiar 'replication' — terrorizes authority with the *ruse* of recognition, its mimicry, its mockery" (emphasis in original). 1 Timothy's rhetoric of piety can be considered a *ruse* in so far as the author attempts to

and ideologies. 1 Timothy's rhetoric of piety, I contend, not only sought to demarcate rival insiders as outsiders, but also to establish an ideal *ekklēsia* recognizable and appealing to potential Roman and provincial converts and critics alike.

I first turn to the apologetic treatise *Against Apion* of Josephus, whose claim to εὐσέβεια and negotiation of Roman imperial culture provides a helpful analogue for thinking about the socio-political functions of 1 Timothy's rhetoric of piety. In this work, Josephus's appeals to εὐσέβεια and representation of the Laws of Moses function to undermine stereotypical invective directed against Jews which portrayed Jews as a seditious and superstition people. An analysis of Josephus's negotiation of imperial power as both a Jew and Roman citizen will supply our study with further comparanda for considering the rhetorical function of piety within 1 Timothy.

## JOSEPHUS'S APOLOGETIC PIETY

Written within the capital of the Roman Empire, Josephus's *Against Apion* defends against popular misconceptions and hostile prejudices toward Jews sometime around the end of the first century C.E.<sup>5</sup> Josephus dedicates this work to

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supply his audience with language that would help members of the *ekklēsia* to appear more recognizable to outsiders, despite the Christological particularity of their definition of piety. However, the Pastorals' rhetoric of piety does not seem to *mock* Roman *pietas*. For an example of Christian claims to piety as mocking Roman *pietas*, see Tertullian's *Apology* 25, 31–35 (see conclusion).

<sup>5</sup> John M. G. Barclay establishes a *terminus post quem* of 94 C.E. on the basis of Josephus's own record of the completion of the treatise (*A.J.* 20.267) and his reference to this same text in *C. Ap.* 1.1; 2.287; idem., *Against Apion*, vol. 10 of *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, ed. Steve Mason (Leiden: Brill, 2007), xxvi–xxviii. On the classification of this text's genre as a defense or "apology," see *ibid.*, xxx–xxxvi.

his non-Jewish (Roman?) patron, Epaphroditus (*C. Ap.* 1.1; 2.2, 296), and to “those who may likewise wish to know about our people” (*C. Ap.* 2.296). While Josephus’s inscribed audience is composed of sympathetic non-Jews, we might also expect that this text was of interest to other learned Jews who shared Josephus’s social status.<sup>6</sup> In this treatise, Josephus sets out to demonstrate the antiquity of the Jewish nation despite its limited attestation within Greek historiography as well as to refute derogatory accounts of Jewish origins and customs as promoted by such Greek historians, poets, and orators as Manetho, Chaeremon, Lysimachus, and Apion. In his refutation of slanderous characterizations of Jews as “atheists” (ἄθεοι), “misanthropists” (μισάνθρωποι), cowards, and “the most untalented of barbarians” (ἀφύεστατοι τῶν βαρβάρων) (*C. Ap.* 2.148), Josephus presents Jewish customs as exemplifying virtues akin to Roman *mores* and eschewing the stereotypical vices of Greeks and Egyptians.<sup>7</sup>

In the following section I will discuss how piety (εὐσέβεια) serves a vital role in Josephus’s rhetorical representation of Jews, constituting the governing virtue of

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<sup>6</sup> On Josephus’s inscribed/declared, implied, and intended audience, see Barclay, *Against Apion*, xlv–li.

<sup>7</sup> Scholars have increasingly recognized how Josephus’s *Against Apion* constructs a Jewish identity aligned with Roman conservative ideals; for example, see Martin Goodman, “Josephus as Roman Citizen,” in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith*, ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 329–38; idem, “Josephus’ Treatise *Against Apion*” in *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, ed. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman, and Simon R. F. Price (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 45–58; Steve Mason, “The *Contra Apionem* in Social and Literary Context: An Invitation to Judean Philosophy,” in *Josephus’ Contra Apionem: Studies in its Character and Context*, ed. Louis H. Feldman and John R. Levinson (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 187–228; Gunnar Haaland, “Jewish Laws for a Roman Audience: Toward an Understanding of *Contra Apionem*,” in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Brüssel 1998*, eds. Jürgen U. Kalms and Folker Siegert (Münster: LIT, 1999), 282–304; Barclay, “Judaism in Roman Dress: Josephus’ Tactics in the *Contra Apionem*,” in *Internationales Josephus-Kolloquium Aarhus 1999*, ed. Jürgen U. Kalms (Münster: LIT, 2000), 231–45; Barclay, *Against Apion*, 362–69.

the Judean constitution (πολίτευμα), namely, the Laws of Moses.<sup>8</sup> Josephus's characterization of Jewish practices as not only pious, but also superior to the stereotypical impious failings he associates with other ethnic groups, especially Egyptians, functions to present the Jewish people and way of life as less foreign and more amenable to Roman sensibilities. I suggest that Josephus's negotiation of the values of his ancestral tradition alongside of Roman *mores* and ideology supplies a useful historical analogue for considering the rhetorical work of piety within the author of 1 Timothy's representation of the ideal *ekklēsia*.<sup>9</sup>

Elite Roman stigmatism of Judeans as a seditious people, punitive taxes, and potential prosecution comprised essential elements of the imperial situation of *Against Apion*. As John M. G. Barclay has insightfully discussed, Judeans living in Rome at the turn of the second century C.E., which included the reigns of Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan, had to negotiate their way of life under imperial regimes that were variably hostile to their customs and ethnic group in the aftermath of the first Jewish War.<sup>10</sup> Not only did Domitian prosecute members on his court on the pretext

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<sup>8</sup> On Josephus's portrayal of Mosaic Laws a constitution comparable to Greek constitutions, see Tessa Rajak, "The *Against Apion* and the Continuities in Josephus' Political Thought," in *Understanding Josephus: Seven Perspectives*, ed. Steve Mason (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 222–46.

<sup>9</sup> For further analogues, see also Philo's attempt to convince the Roman Emperor that the Jewish people are pious nation, loyal to the imperial family (*Legat.* 279), as discussed in Standhartinger, "Eusebeia," 71–72, 79.

<sup>10</sup> See Barclay, *Against Apion* xxxvi–xliv; idem, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE – 117 CE)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 306–19. See also, Seth Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society 200 BCE to 640 CE* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 49–161; Perdue and Carter, *Israel and Empire*, 217–91. For a postcolonial reading of Jews economic situation under Rome, see *ibid.*, 251–63.

of Jewish atheism or *maiestas*,<sup>11</sup> but he also enforced the levy of the Jewish tax (*fiscus Iudaicus*) with “special severity” (*acerbissime*).<sup>12</sup> According to Barclay, a “witch-hunt” for taxable Jews in Rome ensued from Domitian’s policies, producing such “widespread concern” that Nerva thought it politically expedient to mark his ascent to power with coins announcing “the cessations of malicious prosecutions concerning the Judean Tax” (*FISCI IUDAICI CALUMNIA SUBLATA*).<sup>13</sup> It remains ambiguous whether Josephus’s apologetic tone and arguments reflect a direct response to the turbulent reign of Domitian’s final years or the relatively peaceful period following the emperor’s death in 96 C.E.<sup>14</sup> Regardless of the precise political situation, it is apparent that Josephus was concerned about the persistence of

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<sup>11</sup> Cassius Dio, *His. rom* 67.14. On the charge of *crimen maiestatis* (“crime against the majesty of the Emperor”) or as Tacitus renders it, “impiety against the Emperor” (*impietatis in principem*; *Ann.* 6.47), see Richard A. Bauman, *Impietas in principem: A Study of Treason Against the Roman Emperor with a Special Reference to the First Century A.D.* (München: Beck, 1974). See also Margaret H. Williams, “Domitian, the Jews, and the ‘Judaizers’ — A Simple Matter of Cupiditas and Maiestas?,” *Historia* 39 (1990): 196–211.

<sup>12</sup> Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2. Indicative of the humiliating brutality by which Domitian’s excised this tax, Suetonius recalls watching a 90 year old man being stripped naked in a public court to examine whether he had been circumcised and thus liable to the tax. The Jewish tax (*fiscus Iudaicus*) had been originally levied against Jews in the aftermath of the Jewish War, which conscripted money Jews had originally designated for the Temple for the reconstruction of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus (Josephus *Bell* 7.218; Dio Cassius *His. rom.* 66.7.2). The intended humiliation of this tribute is captured in Martial’s poem, “burnt Solyma, lately condemned to pay tribute” (*Epig.* 7.55.7–8). See Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 76–78, 310–11.

<sup>13</sup> Barclay, *Jews in Mediterranean Diaspora*, 311. See also Dio Cassius (*His. rom.* 68.1.2), who records that upon Nerva’s ascension to power, he no longer permitted anyone “to accuse anybody of impiety (*maiestas*) or of adopting the Jewish mode of life” (τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις οὐτ’ ἀσεβείας οὐτ’ Ἰουδαϊκοῦ βίου καταιτιᾶσθαι τινὰς συνεχώρησε). For the coins minted under Nerva, see *BMCRE* III 88, 98, 105–6 pp. 15–19.

<sup>14</sup> For a summary of how scholars have come to different conclusions on the kinds of social and political interventions Josephus’s rhetoric makes on the basis of divergent views upon when it was written, see Barclay, *Against Apion*, xxvii–xxviii; xxxvi–xliv.

Roman perceptions of Jews as neither being politically loyal<sup>15</sup> nor showing “piety toward God as is fitting” (μήτε τὸν θεὸν εὐσεβεῖν ὥς προσήκεν; *C. Ap.* 2.125).<sup>16</sup> Apion’s charge that Jewish customs were demonstrably lacking piety as evidenced by their constant subservience to more divinely favored nations, including Rome (*C. Ap.* 2.125), would have continued to haunt Jews living in Rome during the wake of Jerusalem’s destruction and the erection of the Arch of Titus.<sup>17</sup> Whatever the definitive occasion, as Barclay argues, *Against Apion* aims to “boost sympathy and support for the Judean people, in a context where their culture was subject to varied judgments and was controversial enough to be used to vilify and even indict individuals thought to be ‘drifting into Judean ways.’”<sup>18</sup>

Josephus’s alignment of Jewish ways of life with traditional Roman values, with piety given priority among the virtues, is especially evident in his defense of the theocratic constitution established by Moses against the criticisms of Apollonius

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<sup>15</sup> Apion seems to have played up the Jews’ history of unrest and resistance against the Romans in his indictment against the Jews for their involvement in the Alexandrian conflicts in 40 C.E.; see *C. Ap.* 2.50, 56, 64, 68, 73. According to Barclay, Apion’s dating of the exodus to same year as the foundation of Carthage and Rome (*C. Ap.* 2.17) may have served as a symbolic foreshadowing of the Jews’ hostility toward Rome (*Against Apion*, 185 n. 109).

<sup>16</sup> See also *C. Ap.* 2.65, 73, 117.

<sup>17</sup> For Josephus’s response to this charge, see *C. Ap.* 2.125–134, in which he demonstrates the absurdity of Apion’s accusation. Indeed, some of the most pious cities (e.g., Athens, Ephesus) and leaders (e.g., Croesus) have experienced devastation, despite their unquestionable devotion—even Apion’s own have suffered tragedy despite their own attempts at piety.

<sup>18</sup> Barclay, *Against Apion*, liii.

Molon, Lysimachus, and others (*C. Ap.* 2.145).<sup>19</sup> Through his “defense” (ἀπολογία; *C. Ap.* 2.147), Josephus makes clear that:

we possess laws that are extremely well designed (ἄριστα κειμένους) with a view to piety (εὐσέβειαν), fellowship (κοινωνίαν) with one another, and universal benevolence (τὴν καθόλου φιланθρωπίαν), as well as justice (δικαιοσύνην), endurance (καρτερίαν) in labors, and contempt for death (θανάτου περιφρόνησιν). (*C. Ap.* 2.146, Barclay)

Such virtues as piety, universal benevolence, endurance, and showing contempt for death not only stand in direct opposition to Apollonius’s slanderous characterization of Judeans as being atheists, misanthropists, and cowards (*C. Ap.* 2.148), but also resonate with Roman traditional virtues of justice (*iustitia*), fortitude (*fortitudo*) and contempt for death (*contemptum mortis*).<sup>20</sup> Many of these virtues will appear again in Josephus’s demonstration of the superiority of the Jewish constitution over other Greek constructions of society. Unlike philosophers, including Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Plato, and the Stoics, who deemed the masses unfit for instruction in the true nature of God, Moses harmonized the very shape of

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<sup>19</sup> As Barclay notes in his commentary, Josephus may well be aware of Roman critics to whom he alludes in mentioning “certain others” (*C. Ap.* 2.145), however to name them directly would rhetorically pit Romans against Jews; see *Against Apion*, 247 n. 526.

<sup>20</sup> Different configurations of these virtues appear again in Josephus *C. Ap.* 2.282–83, 293–94. Barclay deftly notes that “endurance in labors” and “contempt for death” are rarely given prominence in Hellenistic Jewish literature, while they do align with traditional Roman values (“Judaism in Roman Dress,” 241). For example, Cicero signals “fortitude in labors and perils” (*fortitudo in laboribus et periculis*) along with justice (*iustitia*) as defining Roman virtues (*Resp.* 1.2); so also Quintilian who lists fortitude (*fortitudo*), justice (*iustitia*), and contempt for pain and death, (*contemptum doloris ac mortis*) (12.2.30); cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (καρτερία ἢ παρὰ τοὺς πόνους; *Ant. rom.* 2.28.1). See also, *C. Ap.* 2.293–94 (Barclay): “Thus, I would be bold enough to say that we have introduced others to an enormous number of ideals that are, at the same time, extremely fine. For what could be finer than unswerving piety (εὐσεβείας)? What could be more just (δικαιότερον) than to obey the laws? What could be more profitable than concord (ὁμόνοεῖν) with one another, and neither to fall out in adverse circumstances, nor in favorable ones to become violent and split into factions, but in war to despise death (θανάτου καταφρονεῖν), and in peace to be diligent in crafts and agriculture, and to be convinced that God is in control, watching over everything everywhere?”



his legislation with a correct understanding about the Divine, making true piety accessible to all—including women and slaves (*C. Ap.* 2.164–170; 181, 184).

Josephus then elaborates on the superiority of Moses’s legislation:

For he did not make piety (εὐσέβειαν) a part of virtue, but recognized and established the others as part of it—that is, justice (δικαιοσύνην), moderation (σωφροσύνην), endurance (καρτερίαν), and harmony (συμφωνίαν) among citizens in relation to one another in all matters. For all practices and occupations, all speech, have reference to our piety towards God (τὴν πρὸς θεὸν ἡμῖν εὐσέβειαν); he did not leave any of these unscrutinized or imprecise. (*C. Ap.* 2.170–1, Barclay)

Again we find the virtues of piety, justice, endurance, and harmony applied to the Jewish constitution, with the Greek virtue of moderation (σωφροσύνην) now included. In the rest of *Against Apion*, Josephus portrays Jewish culture in accord with other classical Roman ideals, such as leading by deeds as opposed to only words (*C. Ap.* 2.171–175),<sup>21</sup> frugality over against luxurious extravagance (*C. Ap.* 2.195, 200, 204–5, 208, 234, 281),<sup>22</sup> and strict sexual and familial morality (*C. Ap.* 2.199–204).<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, Josephus presents Jewish piety as the envy of other nations and far superior to the senseless animal worship of the Egyptians and the perverse mythologies of the Greeks.<sup>24</sup> For Josephus, the very fact that both Greek

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<sup>21</sup> Representative of the Roman view is Quintilian: “For if the Greeks bear away the palm for moral precepts, Rome can produce more striking examples of moral performance, which is a far greater thing” (12.2.30; Butler, LCL); see also Plutarch, *Cat. Maj.* 22.4; Dionysius Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 2.28.

<sup>22</sup> The Roman ideal for a simple and austere way of life is exemplified in Plutarch’s portrait of Cato (*Cat. Maj.* 2.2–3; 4.1–4); see also Tacitus *Ann.* 3.30, 33–34, 53, 55.

<sup>23</sup> For a broad analysis of how Josephus portrays Judean customs intersects with Roman moral discourse, including these virtues among others, see Barclay, *Against Apion*, 362–9.

<sup>24</sup> Such denigration of others’ traditions goes against Josephus’s own previously stated principles: “Those who are wise should remain meticulously faithful to their own laws with regard to piety

philosophers and “the masses” (πολὺς) have sought to emulate Jewish piety (εὐσέβεια) testifies to the overall excellence (ἀρετή) of the Jewish constitution (*C. Ap.* 2.279–286).<sup>25</sup> In contrast to the prudence of Jews, Egyptians are a “senseless” people (*C. Ap.* 1.224–225), whose ancestral divination of animals has even led some to the ridiculous conclusion that those bitten by asps or crocodiles are blessed by the gods (*C. Ap.* 2.86–87).<sup>26</sup> Regarding the Greeks, Josephus joins with “those of superior intelligence” (*C. Ap.* 2.242) in chastising the poor judgment of Greece’s poets and legislators who promoted mythological conceptions of the gods as belligerent, sexually promiscuous, and limited to human categories of occupation and gender (*C. Ap.* 2.239–54). As Barclay astutely observes:

The contrasts which Josephus sets up—between animal-worshiping stupidity and the σεμνότης (one can almost hear the Latin *gravitas*) of Judean ‘theology’ (1.225), between the volatility of Egyptian religious disputes and the harmoniousness of Judean unanimity (2.65–68)—are designed to establish Judean religion as an honorable, safe religion, entirely compatible with the Roman ethos...and its freedom from ‘Greek’ mythology indicates

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(εὐσέβειαν), and not insult the laws of others” (*C. Ap.* 144, Barclay); see also *C. Ap.* 2.237. However, Josephus states that he must fight fire with fire if he is going to adequately address the challenges of his opponents (*C. Ap.* 2.238).

<sup>25</sup> See esp. 2.282–83: What is more, even among the masses for a long time there has been much emulation of our piety (εὐσεβείας), and there is not one city of the Greeks, nor a single barbarian nation, where the custom of the seventh day, on which we rest, has not permeated, and where our fasts and lighting of lamps, and many of our prohibitions with regard to food have not been observed. They try to imitate also our concord among ourselves, our distribution of possessions, our industriousness in crafts, and our endurance under torture on behalf of the laws (*C. Ap.* 2.282–83, Barclay).

<sup>26</sup> This same rhetorical strategy of emphasizing Jewish loyalty to Rome through disparaging Egyptian baseness is evidenced in Philo’s works, e.g., *Decal.* 79–80; *Flacc.* 29; *Fug.* 19; *Mos.* 2.194–5; *Spec.* 3.23–4. See Maren Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, TSAJ 86 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 45–74; P.W. van der Horst, *Philo’s Flaccus, The First Pogrom: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, PACS 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 17–18.

how far it rises above such demeaning conceptions of God (2.239-54).<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Josephus's pious Jews are much closer to the religious and ethical sensibilities of Rome's educated elite, with whom they could share a good laugh over the monstrosity of Egypt's divinities and the perversity of the Greeks.<sup>28</sup> However, Josephus must be careful with his ribbing of Egyptians and Greeks lest his ridicule of different cultures' iconic depictions of the divine hits too close to home for his Roman neighbors.

Such lists of virtues compatible with Roman *mores* and denigration of other ethnic groups not only served to counter negative appraisals of Jewish culture, but also functioned to construct a hybrid Jewish identity amenable to Romans.<sup>29</sup> Josephus presents a Jewish morality that is like-yet-unlike the *mores maiorem* of Rome. While Josephus's Jews remain "unlike" Romans in their steadfast obedience to Mosaic laws, Josephus represents these laws as promoting Roman virtues, including "endurance in labor" and "contempt for death." These virtues are rarely

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<sup>27</sup> Barclay, "The Politics of Contempt: Judaeans and Egyptians in Josephus's *Against Apion*," in *Negotiating Diaspora: Strategies in the Roman Empire*, ed. Barclay (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 109–127; esp. 123.

<sup>28</sup> On the general Roman ridicule directed toward the Egyptian animal cult, see Cicero, *Nat. d.* 1.101; Aelian, *Nat. an.* 12.5; Lucian, *Sacr.* 15; *Deor. conc.* 10–11; *Jupp. trag.* 42; see Barclay, "Politics of Contempt," 122; as well as, Smelik and Hemelrijk, "Egyptian Animal Worship in Antiquity," 1852–2000.

<sup>29</sup> Bhabha has described hybridity as that which "unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identification in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power. For the colonial hybrid is the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire, making its objects at once disciplinary and disseminatory—or, in my mixed metaphor, a negative transparency" (*Location of Culture*, 159–60). On the genealogy of the term 'hybridity,' see Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995). For an example of an insightful use of Bhabha's terms of hybridity and mimicry for reading Josephus, see David A. Kaden, "Flavius Josephus and the *Gentes Devictae* in Roman Imperial Discourse: Hybridity, Mimicry, and Irony in the Agrippa II Speech (*Judean War* 2.345–402)," *JSJ* 42 (2011): 481–507.

given prominence within Hellenistic Jewish literature and probably signal Josephus's attempt to portray Jews as exemplary in Roman *fortitudo* and *contemptum mortis*.<sup>30</sup> The attention that Josephus gives to piety can be understood similarly as his attempt to represent Jews as more "like" Romans and thus imitating Roman ideals. According to Barclay, the "priority given to piety" in *Against Apion* 2.170 quoted above "could elicit approval in a self-consciously religious state, especially when allied with a conservative commitment to preserve ancestral customs and traditional beliefs."<sup>31</sup> As we saw in the last chapter, *pietas* was well entrenched and invested with symbolic value within the ideological self-representation of Roman identity and imperialism. Josephus imitates Roman *pietas*, relying upon the cultural prestige associated with this virtue, with the rhetorical aim of making the Jewish constitution more recognizable and respectable to Roman outsiders.

Piety, within the scope of Josephus's apologetic rhetoric, coordinates a number of other virtues esteemed among Romans to present a Judaism that might undercut the pervasive stereotypes and suspicions that distorted many Romans' perceptions of Jews. Indeed, Josephus even plays with racial stereotypes in directing audiences' attention to the image of foreign Egyptians with their outlandish views

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<sup>30</sup> See Barclay, "Judaism in Roman Dress," 241, and n. 17 above.

<sup>31</sup> Barclay, *Against Apion*, 244. Barclay continues: "The high moral tone in the laws, especially in sexual and family matters, would appeal to Roman moralists, particularly with emphasis on severity in enforcement of the law (2.199-203, 215-17, 276-77, etc.). Frugality, simplicity, and commitment to work (2.204, 234, 281, 291, etc.) are all themes that mirror Roman ideals, as does the priority given to toughness (surpassing the much-admired Spartans) and contempt for death (2.146, 219-35, 283, etc.). These are the features that Romans admired when they weighed up the merits of other cultures, and there is good reason to expect that such elements in Josephus's depiction of Judean culture could win a sympathetic reception from a Roman audience" (p. 244). So also, Standhartinger, "Eusebeia," 79.

about the divine. These barbaric Egyptians are less civilized foreigners who are more deserving of Roman scorn and suspicion. Jews, on the other hand, according to Josephus, are ideal imperial subjects and only seek to excel in virtue and obedience to their ancestral customs—convictions Romans might empathize with considering their duty to follow the *mos maiorum* that supposedly had been passed down over centuries.<sup>32</sup> As for those Roman Jews reading Josephus's *Against Apion*, they may have been encouraged to discover not only such an encomium of their beliefs and practices, but also an example of how they might give an account of their ethnic customs to curious or suspicious Roman neighbors.

Josephus's rhetoric of piety elicits both questions and potential insights into the socio-political aims and effects of the author of 1 Timothy's deployment of this virtue. How might the author's representation of the *ekklēsia* align with Roman norms and ideologies? More specifically, might the author's use of virtues esteemed among Romans, including piety, serve a broader socio-political function of addressing Roman suspicions against Christians analogous to how Josephus addresses those against Jews?

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<sup>32</sup> See van der Blom's summation of rhetorical function of *mos maiorum* within Roman political discourse: "The fundamental importance of *mos maiorum* for the right interpretation of constitutional practices of the Roman state meant that the ancestors were revered as providers of such practices and that their actions and decisions were regarded as one of the leading principles in all aspects of life. The nature of *mos maiorum* meant that it was a very flexible source of practices and that the actions and customs of the ancestors could always be reinterpreted. In this way, the Romans looked to the past not only for solutions but also for qualifications for present situations which suited their own particular agenda" (*Cicero's Role Models*, 12).

## THE AMBIGUITY OF PIETY IN PRAYERS FOR THE EMPEROR (1 TIM. 2:1–7)

We begin our analysis of the Pastoral Epistles with its clearest example of a claim to piety made alongside of a deferential gesture toward imperial power. In 1 Timothy 2:1–7, the author provides the following instruction:

Παρακαλῶ οὖν πρῶτον πάντων ποιεῖσθαι δεήσεις προσευχὰς ἐντεύξεις εὐχαριστίας ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων ὑπὲρ βασιλέων καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντων, ἵνα ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι. τοῦτο καλὸν καὶ ἀπόδεκτον ἐνώπιον τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ, ὃς πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν. Εἷς γὰρ θεός, εἷς καὶ μεσίτης θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰσοῦς, ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἰδίοις. εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος, ἀλήθειαν λέγω οὐ ψεύδομαι, διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ.

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all those in high positions, so that we might lead a tranquil and quiet life in all piety (εὐσεβείᾳ) and dignity (σεμνότητι). This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior (σωτῆρος), who wants everyone to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For God is one and the mediator (μεσίτης) between God and humans is one, the human Jesus Christ, who gave himself as a ransom for everyone's sake—a testimony in line with God's own timing, for which I was appointed a herald and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the nations in faith and truth.

In this paraenetic passage, the author exhorts the *ekklēsia* to pray for the well-being and even the salvation of Roman emperors, Rome's client kings, and local governing authorities.<sup>33</sup> The author describes this practice as aligning with God's desire for all people, including rulers, to find salvation through the distinct mediation of Christ.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> The term βασιλεύς (king) was used to reference rulers in the Greek world as well as Roman emperors in Asia Minor, despite the fact that the Latin term *rex* could not be applied to the emperor in Italy without raising the ire of Romans. See Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 36.

<sup>34</sup> See Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 421–22; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 162–65; For examples of early Christian prayers for the deliverance of God's elect and for all people, see 1 *Clem.* 59.4; 60–61; Ignatius, *Eph.* 10; Polycarp, *Phil.* 12.2–3; Tertullian, *Apol.* 30.

Of interest to our study is the author's description of the ideal life, which is secured through the emperor's prosperity, as marked by "piety" (εὐσέβεια) and "dignity" (σεμνότης). Numerous scholars have argued that this description of prayer on behalf of the emperor, its results, and justification echoes the ideological principles of the Roman imperial cult that flourished in Asia Minor.<sup>35</sup> Scholars like Francis Young and Malcolm Gill have stressed that 1 Timothy's description of God and Jesus as "savior" and "mediator" resonates with titles ascribed to the Roman emperor.<sup>36</sup> How might the deployment of piety in this passage coordinate with 1 Timothy's other references to practices and terms familiar to the imperial cult? I set aside designations of this passage as either resistant or accommodating to imperial power and ask what role does piety play in the negotiation of its imperial situation and God's salvific plan?

The author of 1 Timothy's promotion of a loyal attitude toward imperial power and use of terminology recognizable within the imperial cult constitutes a rhetorical strategy also employed by other Hellenistic Jewish authors. Both Philo and Josephus provide evidence that Jews living during the early imperial principate demonstrated their loyalty to the emperor through praying and offering sacrifices neither *directly toward* the emperor himself nor his *genius*, but toward the God of Israel *on behalf of* the emperor, the Roman people, and other governing

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<sup>35</sup> See Margaret M. Mitchell, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in *1 Timothy Reconsidered* ed. Karl P. Donfried, Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum 18 (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 41–62, esp. 56; Malcolm Gill, *Jesus as Mediator: Politics and Polemic in 1 Timothy 2:1–7* (Oxford: Lang, 2008); Harry O. Maier, *Picturing Paul in Empire: Imperial Image, Text and Persuasion in Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> See Francis Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Epistles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 64–65; Gill, *Jesus as Mediator*.

authorities.<sup>37</sup> In his apologetic treatise, *Against Flaccus*, Philo describes Jewish houses of prayer (προσευχαί) as the Alexandrian Jews' essential means of "showing piety to their benefactors" (τὴν εἰς τοὺς εὐεργέτας εὐσέβειαν), which include the greatest of benefactors, the Roman emperor (*Flacc.* 48).<sup>38</sup> Philo continues, "for Jews all over the habitable world, houses of prayer are clearly the starting-point of reverence toward the household of Augustus" (τοῖς πανταχόθι οἰκουμένης Ἰουδαίοις ὀρμητήρια τῆς εἰς τὸν Σεβαστὸν οἶκον ὁσιότητός εἰσιν αἱ προσευχαὶ ἐπιδήλως, *Flacc.* 49). In these passages, Philo represents Jewish houses of prayer across the empire as focal points of dutiful reverence directed toward the imperial house, namely, Roman *pietas*. For Philo, Roman *pietas* functions to portray Jews as ideal Roman subjects whose gatherings are not subversive, but are in fact compatible with the imperial cult's ideals of honoring the Roman emperor for his benefaction.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> See Philo, *Flacc.* 49; *Legat.* 356; Josephus *B.J.* 2.197, 408–10; see also Philo *Legat.* 152, 157, 317; esp. 133, where Philo describes the gilded shields and crowns, pillars, and inscriptions that honored the Roman Emperor and ornamented Jewish houses of prayer in Egypt. Evidence for the broad Jewish practice of praying and making offerings to the God of Israel on behalf of non-Jewish rulers can be found in Jer. 36 (LXX); Ezra 6:6–12; 1 *Bar.* 1:1–38; *Ep. Aris.* 45; 1 Macc 7:33; see Dibelius/Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 37–39; Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 68–69. On Philo's description of Jewish worship in relation to the imperial cult, see Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, 79–82, 131. The Pastoral Epistles' position on prayer is elaborated upon by Tertullian, who very well may have had 1 Timothy 2 in mind, when he argues for the superior and legitimate piety of Christians in their solemn prayers on behalf of the emperor's welfare; see Tertullian, *Apol.* 30–39; cp. Rom. 13:1–7; 1 Pet. 2:13–17; 1 *Clem.* 61.

<sup>38</sup> In *Flacc.* 74, Philo describes Augustus as "the Savior and Benefactor" (ὁ σωτὴρ καὶ εὐεργέτης) of the Jews. See also, *Flacc.* 103, 126; *Gaius* 22, 50, 60, 148–49, 283, 297.

<sup>39</sup> See also van der Horst, *Philo's Flaccus*, 17–18, 146–48; Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity*, 79–82, esp. 131: "The cultic veneration of Augustus in the Alexandrian *Caesareium* was in [Philo's] view compatible with Jewish values and Jewish identity." If Niehoff is correct that Philo composed *Against Flaccus*, in part, to persuade fellow Alexandrian Jewish intellectuals and friends that the recent crises in Jerusalem and Alexandria during the reign of Gaius are to be regarded as exceptions to the



Yet in as much as offering prayers to God on behalf of the emperor was “good and pleasing before the sight of God our savior,” so too was it pleasing to the emperor who also bore the title “savior” (σωτήρ) within the ideological discourse of imperial propaganda and honorary inscriptions.<sup>40</sup> For example, monumental inscriptions marked the cityscape of Ephesus, honoring the emperors Augustus, Hadrian, and Antoninus Pius as saviors for their benefaction to the city.<sup>41</sup> This imperial ideology that elevated Augustus as the divinely sent “savior” and “benefactor” of the world was further reified across Asia Minor within the Priene Calendar Inscription (9 B.C.E.), which commemorated the replacement of the local lunary calendar with the solar Julian calendar and the established Augustus’s birthday (September 23) as the beginning of the year.<sup>42</sup> This inscription, written in both Latin and Greek, celebrates that:

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otherwise benevolent governance of imperial rule (pp. 13, 111–36), then *pietas* also furthers these aims: now that Claudius has succeeded Gaius, Alexandrian Jewish worship should proceed with confidence in habituating Jews to be loyal or *pious* subjects just as it had already done so under such great benefactors, Augustus and Tiberius.

<sup>40</sup> See Donald L. Jones, “Christianity and the Roman Imperial Cult,” *ANRW* 2.23.2 (1980): 1023–1054; Gill, *Jesus as Mediator*, 94–97; Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 359–361.

<sup>41</sup> See Steven M. Baugh, “‘Savior of all People’: 1 Tim. 4:10 in Context,” *WTJ* 54 (1992): 331–40; Sjef van Tilborg, *Reading John in Ephesus* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 47–50. For inscriptions identifying Julius Caesar as “savior,” see *IEph* 2.251; for Hadrian, see *IEph* 2.271F, 272, 274; 5.1501; 7.3271, 3410; for Antoninus Pius, see *IEph* 5.1504. On the common Greco-Roman use of “σωτήρ” to celebrate benefactors, see Arthur Darby Nock, “*Soter and Euergetes*” in *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972) 2.720–35; Frederick W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1982), 324–25.

<sup>42</sup> This inscription was displayed in both Greek and Latin across Asia Minor, with discoveries of this inscription found in Apamea, Dorylaeum, Eumenia, Maeonia, and Priene. For early discussions on the relevance of the Priene Inscription for New Testament studies, see Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (New York: Harper & Row, 1927) 366; Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 3–4.

πρόνοια...ὃν εἰς εὐεργεσίαν ἀνθρώπων ἐπλήρωσεν ἀρετῆς...σωτήρα  
πέμψασα τὸν παύσοντα μὲν πόλεμον, κοσμήσοντα δὲ πάντα...εὐεργέτας  
ὑπερβαλόμενος...ἤρξεν δὲ τῷ κόσμῳ τῶν δι' αὐτὸν εὐαγγελίων ἡ  
γενέθλιος ἡμέρα τοῦ θεοῦ.

Providence...has filled him [Augustus] with virtue so that he might benefit humankind, sending him as a savior....that he might end war and arrange everything...surpassing all benefactors...the birthday of God was the beginning of the good news for the world.<sup>43</sup>

By exhorting Christians to pray for the emperor, the author of 1 Timothy tacitly endorses a practice of prayer promoted by and supportive of imperial ideology. This ideology held that the emperor, in his capacity as the high priest (*pontifex maximus*) of Rome's state cult, was especially near to the gods and secured the gods' benefaction to the empire through his pious service toward them. Prayers and sacrifices made on behalf of the emperor's well-being, not only ensured the *pax Romana* (Roman peace) but also reinscribed the emperor's superlative status and naturalized his political power.<sup>44</sup> Augustus himself encouraged Roman citizens to revere his family *lares* in altars built in each of Rome's administrative districts (*vici*). Later emperors granted their approval of the construction of imperial cults established in important provincial cities across the *oikoumenē* (inhabited Roman world), including Ephesus.<sup>45</sup> With the reign of Trajan, provincial subjects were invited to formally intercede on behalf of the emperor's safety for the sake of the security, peace, and welfare of the Roman state and its subjects.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> For Greek text, see *OGIS* 458, trans. mine.

<sup>44</sup> On the practice of ritual sacrifice to/on behalf of the emperor, see Simon R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 207–33.

<sup>45</sup> See Simon R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power*, 136–46; also chapter 4.

<sup>46</sup> See Standhartinger, "Eusebeia," 80.

The resonance between the themes and terminology of the imperial cult and 1 Timothy can be further observed in the author's description of the ideal life as one lived in tranquility and quiet, "with all piety and respectability" (1 Tim. 2:2). Piety (εὐσέβεια) was often employed in monumental inscriptions relating to the imperial cult across Asia Minor to describe a leading citizen's or city's loyal reverence toward the imperial dynasty.<sup>47</sup> For example, a number of inscriptions on statue bases dedicated by different cities in Asia Minor, including Aphrodisias, Philadelphia, and Stratonikeia, celebrate the establishment of the imperial cult in Ephesus honoring the Flavian dynasty in 89/90 C.E. and promote their "piety toward the Augusti" (τὴν πρὸς τοὺς [Σε]βαστοὺς εὐσέβειαν).<sup>48</sup> Such loyal piety toward the emperor was not only expressed through the dedication of temples in veneration of the imperial

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<sup>47</sup> See Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 361–63; Gill, *Jesus as Mediator*, 100–1, 147–52. For inscriptions describing piety directed toward the imperial family, see the proconsul of Asia (103/4 C.E.) celebration of Salutaris: "May I congratulate him that his piety toward the goddess [Artemis] and the Augusti (τῇ[ν] τε πρὸς τὴν θεὸν εὐσεβειαν [καὶ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς Σε]βαστοῦ[ς]), and his goodwill toward the city in theater now become clear to all" (*I Eph.* 27, ln. 367). For more references, see chapter 4.

<sup>48</sup> See *I Eph* 233, 236 and 237. See esp. the treatment of these inscriptions, in Steven J. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 29–41, 156–58. According to Friesen, the free cities of Aphrodisia and Stratonikeia were not pleased that Ephesus proclaimed itself as the unique temple-warden (νεωκόρος) of the imperial cult dedicated to the Flavian dynasty in Asia Minor, and so sought to advertise their own status as benefactors to the cult's construction and piety toward the imperial family (p. 156). As Friesen observes, "the longer inscriptions tend to minimize the significance of the cult for Ephesus, while emphasizing the role of the other cities of the province" (p. 40). At stake behind such public displays of benefaction and virtue for these cities likely lies the maintenance of their privileged status as some of the few "free and autonomous" cities within Asia Minor and the economic advantages such positions entailed. The imperial recognition of a Greek city as free (ἐλεύθερος) and autonomous (αὐτόνομος) provided them with exceptional social, political, and financial benefits by means of numerous exemptions ranging from Roman taxes, visits by the proconsul of Asia and interference with their laws, and even from the conscription of its citizens' services by other cities within the province or by the provincial council itself. Such a status was highly coveted by others cities and rarely bestowed. Thus the rhetoric of piety in these inscriptions constitutes these cities' negotiation of imperial power in maintaining their special status by displaying their loyal devotion to the imperial family.

dynasty, but also by prayers to and on behalf of the emperor.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, it is possible that “respectability” (σεμνότης) or “dignity”<sup>50</sup> was perceived as a Greek gesture toward the Roman virtue of *gravitas*, which denoted a distinguished depth of character.<sup>51</sup> According to Trebilco, such recognizable terminology functioned to build “linguistic bridges” between the *ekklēsia* and “the wider society,” so that the Gospel might “become more comprehensible to outsiders.”<sup>52</sup> That is to say, the author’s use of language and concepts associated with the imperial cult, including piety and its endorsement of prayers on behalf of the emperor, functioned to present a persuasive representation of Christian practice and goals in a manner recognizable and perhaps appealing to outsiders. Therefore, it becomes imperative to qualify the conclusions of some scholars that 1 Timothy overtly subverts Roman ideology on the basis of the text’s appropriation of such terms associated with the imperial cult including piety, savior, and mediator.

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<sup>49</sup> See Price, *Rituals and Power*, 3 (dedication of a temple to Augustus as act of piety), 232 (prayers as expression of piety).

<sup>50</sup> See 1 Tim 2:2; 3:4; Titus 2:7; for its cognate, σεμνός, see 1 Tim 3:8, 11; Titus 2:2; and Phil 4:8. Cf. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 187–89.

<sup>51</sup> So Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.362–63; *RAC* 12: 752–759, esp. 762–63; Foerster, “σεμνός, σεμνότης,” *TDNT* 7:191–96; esp. 195. Thus, to a particularly acculturated audience, 1 Timothy 2 could have been interpreted as representing the life for which believers pray as marked by the esteemed Roman virtues of *pietas* and *dignitas*. However, such a suggestion must remain speculative, as not even the Latin vulgate rendered σεμνότης as *dignitas*, but rather *casitas* (purity, chastity). An intriguing contemporary analogue is an inscription by Salutaris in Ephesus from 104 C.E. (see chapter 3), in which the council (βουλή) of Ephesus is described as the “emperor-revering and respectable council” (τῆς φιλοσεβάστου καὶ σεμνοτάτης Ἐφεσίων βουλῆς; *I Eph* 27b). While this too does not necessarily signal Roman *dignitas*, its juxtaposition with the “reverence for/loyalty to the August-one” (φιλοσέβαστος) suggests that this term was an appropriate virtue to hold as a loyal and honorable subject—thus, a fitting term for 1 Timothy 2:2 to employ to underline its own virtues befitting a loyal subject.

<sup>52</sup> Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 374–75. So also, Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 144; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 169.

For example, Malcolm Gill has argued that 1 Timothy's description of God as "savior" (σωτήρ) and Christ Jesus as the "one mediator" (εἷς μεσίτης) offers a direct challenge to Roman ideology that identified the emperor as the world's "savior" and the preeminent mediator between humanity and the gods as Rome's *pontifex maximus*.<sup>53</sup> According to Phillip H. Towner, the author "certainly intended...to reinvent the language and subvert alternative claims about the nature and source of godliness [piety] associated with political and religious cults in the empire."<sup>54</sup> However, as Korinna Zamfir interjects, although the author derives such language from the imperial cult, it does not necessarily indicate a polemical intention. "Writers applied to God political titles," Zamfir observes, "not because they wished to defy the rule of earthly monarchs, but simply because they described God(s) as the highest known authority."<sup>55</sup> Given the prevalence of the "savior" appellation in the Asia Minor, one wonders if anyone but the presumed antagonistic author and fellow insiders would have recognized the polemical edge of 1 Timothy 2—certainly not outsiders familiar with the co-existence of a plurality of "saviors" over different domains (e.g., the city, the empire, the heavens, etc.).<sup>56</sup> In this manner, the rhetoric

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<sup>53</sup> Gill, *Jesus as Mediator*, 152–62. On the first-century conception of "mediator," see pp. 111–31. See also, Maier, *Picturing Paul*, 157–64, who discusses the "increasingly dramatic and monotheistic" imagery and titles that become associated with the imperial cult, beginning with Domitian and including Trajan and Hadrian (p. 158).

<sup>54</sup> Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 169. So also, Young, *Theology of the Pastoral Epistles*, 65.

<sup>55</sup> Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 149. Maier, too, critiques Gill's position, *Picturing Paul*, 163–64.

<sup>56</sup> In Asia Minor alone, the term "savior" was ascribed to not only emperors, senators, generals, and numerous divinities including Zeus, Asclepius, Athena, and Artemis; see Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 148–49; see also, Dibelius/Conzelmann, 100–4; Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 359–61; and Gill, *Jesus as Mediator*, 152–55.

of 1 Timothy by no means offers a challenge to imperial power that necessarily would have been registered as such by outsiders. However we cannot discount the possibility that some early Christians interpreted the Pastorals as offering an indirect or even “hidden” challenge to Roman ideology.<sup>57</sup> While Gill and Towner have emphasized how the language of 1 Timothy 2 *resists* the imperial situation, I worry that such analyses over-emphasize the polemical posture of 1 Timothy toward imperial power at the expense of appreciating what I suggest is the *predominant* social and political function of 1 Timothy’s references to the imperial cult.

I contend that 1 Timothy 2’s appeal to piety and language associated with the imperial cult *primarily* functions to persuade its audience to embody behavior commensurate with social values esteemed in Roman political discourse.<sup>58</sup> As I discussed in the previous chapter, the author is concerned with how outsiders view the *ekklēsia* and may well be responding to broader Roman suspicions about Christians’ anti-sociality and disloyalty to the state as represented by Pliny, Tacitus,

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<sup>57</sup> On idea of a “hidden” concept or “transcript” and its sociological function among colonized people, see James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). See also Zamfir’s application of Scott’s concepts to the Pastoral Epistles in, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 16–18: “The author voices a ‘public transcript,’ promoting subordination to (Roman) authorities and ecclesial authority, and compliance with the social norms demanding the submission of inferior members. We do *not* hear the hidden transcript (unless we take the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* as a later expression of the voices silenced by the PE)” (p. 18).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus* 171, who suggests that the language of “piety” and “savior” (along with “epiphany” and “lord”) resonate with claims associated with the Ephesian cult of Artemis and thus, polemically “confronts the cultural story” of Ephesus. While this is an interesting suggestion, it is beyond the scope of this paper to address its merits. However, Towner’s reading is neither incompatible with my own reading nor represents the *dominant* rhetorical edge of this passage.

and Suetonius.<sup>59</sup> 1 Timothy's representation of followers of Christ praying for the well-being of every person, including the emperor, and serve a God that desires the salvation of everyone could be used to disrupt stereotypical perceptions of Christians as misanthropes. The author's vision of a "quiet and peaceable life, in all piety and respectability" signals a life that does not seek to disrupt Roman order, but rather is supportive of ideals fitting for loyal subjects. Furthermore, Titus 3:1 explicitly instructs believers in Christ to be obedient and "submit" (ὑποτάσσεσθαι) to Roman authorities.

How then might we coherently account for, on the one hand, the author of 1 Timothy's explicit compliance with imperial authority, and, on the other hand, his application of titles associated with the emperor to both God and Jesus, however slight a polemic it might represent?<sup>60</sup> I suggest that a description of 1 Timothy 2 as negotiating its imperial situation "resists the binary representation of social antagonism," which would classify this passage as *either* accommodation or resistance.<sup>61</sup> Negotiation holds together both postures toward imperial power in a

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<sup>59</sup> For example, see Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44, in which he describes Christians as being arrested on account of their hatred for humanity (*odio humani*); see chapter 1. While I agree with Marshall's interpretation that 1 Tim 2 addresses a real perception of persecution among early Christians, I am not persuaded by his ancillary suggestion that the author's exhortation to prayer and emphasis upon God's desire to save all people addresses some form of spiritual elitism held by the opponents who did not consider salvation to be available to all people (*Pastoral Epistles*, 418). Not only is such a reading unnecessary, but it also illustrates the interpretive pitfalls inherent to our method of "mirror-reading" an author's exhortations and prohibitions in order to construct the rhetorical situation. Cf. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 85.

<sup>60</sup> On the "slight" polemic of 1 Tim 2:1–7, see Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 213–14; Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, 51, 61.

<sup>61</sup> Homi Bhabha, "Culture's Inbetween," *Artforum* 32 (1993): 167–71; 170. For a similar reading of Paul's rhetorical posture in Rom. 13:1–7, see John W. Marshall, "Hybridity and Reading Romans 13," *JST* 31.2 (2008): 157–178.

dialectical relationship that mutually informs the rhetorical work of this passage. In 1 Timothy 2:1–7, the author negotiates the *ekklēsia*’s position between both hegemonic imperial ideology and the ultimate sovereignty of the God of Israel and Jesus Christ. While the author encourages the *ekklēsia* to demonstrate its loyalty to the empire, the implied theology of 1 Timothy stands its ground concerning the author’s conviction that the divine munificence bestowed upon the Roman Empire results from the prayers of the *ekklēsia* to their Savior God. Nevertheless, the author’s admonition maintains a common ideological principal of the Roman Empire that the welfare of the emperor provides the opportune conditions for a pious existence. The author aims to benefit from this affirmation of imperial ideology in representing followers of Christ as loyal to the state. Thus, the author of 1 Timothy’s use of language familiar to the imperial cult straddles the dual positions of exhibiting a reverent deference toward imperial power, while offering its own counter-narrative about the true location of piety and global mission of “God our Savior” and Jesus the one mediator—a theological position that benefited from its discreteness or camouflage of *pietas* before the imperial gaze.

1 Timothy then provides its audience with an articulation of Christian behavior useful for ameliorating Roman suspicions about Christian disloyalty to the state or misanthropy—prejudices which I identified among elite Roman discourses in chapter 1, while allowing its Christian audiences to retain a measure of confidence in the cultural legitimacy of their beliefs and practices. Such a rhetorical move does not represent an *overt* polemical critique of the Roman Empire. As Witherington rightly notes, “[a]s a tiny minority in the empire, Christians could not



afford to upset the applecart unnecessarily” such that any direct or overt polemic against the emperor could draw even more negative attention toward the group.<sup>62</sup> However, neither does it represent some flat understanding of “accommodation” or “secularization.”<sup>63</sup> As Standhartinger observes, “[f]or the provincials [during the reign of Hadrian], who now formally ask twice a year for the well-being (*salus*) of the emperor, for the protection and welfare (*tutela, salus*) of the state and of all humanity, the prayer of 1 Tim 2:2-3 is more than a superficial expression of civic loyalty.”<sup>64</sup> I contend that 1 Timothy 2 is indicative of the author’s negotiation of the imperial situation that strategically imitates the discourse associated with the imperial cult in order to portray Christians as loyal subjects fitting with the desires of the imperial gaze. The author deploys recognizable cultural terms, including piety, in order to build bridges between the *ekklēsia* and the outside world so that all might be saved.<sup>65</sup> Such an interpretation leaves open the possibility of reading the author’s use of language as subversive to Roman imperial ideology, without identifying it as the demonstrative rhetorical function of his use of terms associated with the imperial cult. As I stress above, the primary rhetorical function of the author’s rhetoric of piety and instruction to pray for imperial authorities is to

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<sup>62</sup> Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy*, 214.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 173. Cf. Mitchell, “Corrective Composition,” 56.

<sup>64</sup> Standhartinger, “*Eusebeia*,” 80: Für Provinzbewohner, die nun zweimal im Jahr feierlich die Götter um das Heil (*salus*) des Kaisers, von dem Schutz und Heil (*tutela, salus*) des Staates und der ganzen Menschheit abhingen, bitten sollten, ist das Gebet aus 1 Tim 2:2-3 mehr als ein Ausdruck oberflächlicher staatsbürger Loyalität. For Standhartinger, the author’s use of piety and exhortation to prayers ultimately serves an “apologetic goal” (apologetisches Ziel) (p. 81). Cf. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument*, 174; Reggie M. Kidd, “Titus as *Apologia*: Grace for Liars, Beasts, and Bellies,” *HBT* 21 (1999): 185-209.

<sup>65</sup> See also Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 373-79, 384.

encourage its audiences to adopt recognizably compliant postures toward imperial power. This posture, I suggest, is likely informed by elite Roman discourses evident within Pliny, Tacitus, and Suetonius that suspected Christian assemblies of fomenting sedition and anti-social behavior. As we shall see in the next section, the author's negotiation of this imperial situation is further worked out in its admonitions to women to fulfill their moral and social obligations that befit their gender in accordance with broader societal norms.

### **PIETAS IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD**

The author deploys Roman *pietas* in 1 Timothy not only to signal the *ekklēsia*'s loyalty toward imperial authorities, but also to encourage compliance in behavior that is consistent with societal expectations, especially within the domain of the household. This latter sense of *pietas* as dutiful affection toward the family that prompts appropriate behavior within a household, including that of slaves toward masters, plays a central role within 1 Timothy's representation of the *ekklēsia* as the household of God (οἶκος θεοῦ; 1 Tim 3:15) and exhortations toward believers. If the *ekklēsia* is the household of God, then *pietas* is an essential element that holds the family together—that sense of social obligation and duty that maintains harmony and order in the house.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> As Richard P. Saller notes, this sense of duty often denoted a mutual and reciprocal devotion to one's families (e.g., a father's care for his son, a son's care for his father or mother). See Saller, "PIETAS, Obligation and Authority in the Roman Family," in *Alte Geschichte und Wissenschaftsgeschichte: Festschrift für Karl Christ zum 65.*, ed. Peter Kneissl and Volker Losemann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1988), 393–410.

As I demonstrated in chapter 1, imperial propaganda associated *pietas* with the households of Trajan and Hadrian. The imperial household not only set an example in piety for its subjects to follow, but also rhetorically signaled a return to an Augustan golden age of peace and stability that was to begin in the emperor's home. The extent to which an emperor's house was in order was a strong indicator of his capacity to run an empire. Such propaganda served to naturalize the young dynasty of Trajan and Hadrian. For the Pastoral Epistles, especially 1 Timothy, I suggest that imperial discourse about *pietas* informs the author's admonitions toward men, women, widows, and slaves to adopt behavior that befits the household of God. In both the cases of wealthy women and widows, close cognates of εὐσέβεια are evoked: θεοσέβεια (1 Tim 2:10) and εὐσεβέω (1 Tim 5:4). After a brief overview of the οἶκος motif in 1 Timothy, I will analyze how 1 Timothy's admonitions to both women and widows to adopt behavior resonates with the virtues of the ideal matron evidenced within Roman imperial discourse. In these passages the rhetoric of piety functions to naturalize the author's authority over against rival positions, demarcating such rival insiders as outsiders, as well as responds to prejudicial stereotypes about Christians, which suspected them of promoting a foreign superstition antithetical to the *mores maiorem*. I argue that the author of 1 Timothy's rhetoric of *pietas* serves to emphasize the ideal *ekklēsia's* support of Greco-Roman social values, which not inconsequentially were associated with the emperor's household, in its negotiation of the imperial situation.

### The *Ekklēsia* as *Oikos*

Over the past twenty years, there has been no dearth of studies on the role of the household as a governing model within 1 Timothy or on the Pastoral Epistles' use of patriarchal household or station codes<sup>67</sup> in prescribing proper attitudes and behavior in the face of heterodox opposition.<sup>68</sup> Direct references to the household (οἶκος) and its management (οἰκονομία) show up throughout the Pastoral Epistles, particularly in 1 Timothy. In the opening of 1 Timothy, the author introduces the heterodox opposition as those preoccupied with speculations rather than with the household stewardship of God (οἰκονομία θεοῦ; 1 Tim 1:4), namely, how God has assigned responsibilities for different believers to carry out.<sup>69</sup> The author then goes

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<sup>67</sup> Station codes, in contrast to household codes, encompass the duties expected of people given their social, political, and economic position or "station" in life (e.g., rich/poor, patron/client, old/young), that extend beyond the categories of relationships which constitute the household (e.g., husband/wife, father/child, master/slave). Some literature on the Pastoral Epistles uses "station codes" to incorporate 1 Timothy's admonitions toward the rich and Titus's toward the old and young within a common schema that includes instructions on how husbands, wives, and children should treat one another within the *ekklēsia*. For example, see David C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 90–91; Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*.

<sup>68</sup> For example, see Verner, *The Household of God*; Ulrike Wagener, *Die Ordnung des "Hauses Gottes": Der Ort von Frauen in der Ekklesiologie und Ethik der Pastoralbriefe*, WUNT 265 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994); Portefaix, "Good Citizenship," 147–58; Yuko Taniguchi, "To Lead Quiet and Peaceable Lives: A Rhetorical Analysis of the First Letter to Timothy" (ThD diss., Harvard Divinity School, 2002); Fatum, "Christ Domesticated"; Lorenz Oberlinner, "Gemeindeordnung und rechte Lehre: Zur Fortschreibung der paulinischen Ekklesiologie in den Pastoralbriefen," *TQ* 187 (2007): 295–308; David G. Horrell, "From ἀδελφοί to οἶκος θεοῦ: Social Transformation in Pauline Christianity," *JBL* 120 (2001): 293–311; idem., "Disciplining Performance and 'Placing' the Church: Widows, Elders, and Slaves in the Household of God (1 Tim 5,1–6,2)," in *1 Timothy Reconsidered*, ed. Karl P. Donfried; Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum 18 (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 109–34; Margaret Y. MacDonald, "Beyond Identification of the Topos of Household Management: Reading the Household Codes in Light of Recent Methodologies and Theoretical Perspectives in the Study of the New Testament," *NTS* 57 (2010): 65–90; Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*; see esp. the bibliography of Zamfir, "Is the *ekklēsia* a Household (of God)? Reassessing the Notion of οἶκος θεοῦ in 1 Tim. 3.15," *NTS* 60 (2011): 511–528, esp. 512 n. 2.

<sup>69</sup> On the interpretation of οἰκονομία θεοῦ, see Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 366–68; Towner, *Letters*, 112–14.

on to describe the *ekklēsia* as the household of God (οἶκος θεοῦ; 1 Tim 3:15).<sup>70</sup>

According to the author, the ideal overseer (ἐπισκοπή) (1 Tim 3:4–5),<sup>71</sup> deacon (1 Tim 3:12),<sup>72</sup> and woman (1 Tim 5:14)<sup>73</sup> should be able to manage their household (οἶκος). Regarding the qualifications for the (male) office of overseer, the author rhetorically asks, “if he does not know how to manage his own household (οἴκου), how can he take care of God’s *ekklēsia*?” (1 Tim 3:5).<sup>74</sup> Thus according to 1 Timothy, members of the *ekklēsia* must be faithful in their household duties, if they expect to fulfill their obligations within the household of God.

Korinna Zamfir has masterfully demonstrated that 1 Timothy’s presentation of the *ekklēsia* as a household (οἶκος) reflects broader cultural discourses that conceptualized the *polis* (city), which is comprised of the *ekklēsia* (civic assembly),

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<sup>70</sup> Cf. 2 Tim 2:20–21. Pace Jens Herzer, “Rearranging the ‘House of God’: Perspective on the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Empsychoi Logoi—Religious Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst*, ed. Alberdina Houtman, Albert de Jong, Magda Misset-van de Weg (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 547–66. Herzer unconvincingly argues that the οἶκος θεοῦ in 1 Tim 3:15 metaphorically describes the community as a “temple” of God much in the same way as Paul describes the *ekklēsia* (1 Cor. 3:16–17; 2 Cor. 6:16, 19). However, the *ekklēsia* in 1 Tim 3:15 does not simply describe the community, but the space and its accompanying rules by which the community should adjust its behavior. While the connotation of the house as a temple may not be absent (so Johnson, *First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 231), the thematic force of the household metaphor in 1 Timothy is too strong to allow for Herzer’s suggestion—especially given that the idea of God’s Temple does not seem to play any other explicit rhetorical function within the epistle.

<sup>71</sup> The overseer must “manage his own household well” (τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον); cf. Titus 1:7, where the overseer is described as God’s household manager (θεοῦ οἰκονόμον).

<sup>72</sup> Deacons, like elders, too, must manage their children and households well (διάκονοι... τέκνων καλῶς προϊστάμενοι καὶ τῶν ἰδίων οἴκων; 1 Tim 3:12).

<sup>73</sup> In 1 Tim 5:14, the author exhorts young widows to remarry, bear children, and “to manage their households” (οἰκοδεσποτεῖν). In Titus 2:4, older women are to teach young women how to be “good managers” (οἰκουργοὺς ἀγαθὰς).

<sup>74</sup> εἰ δέ τις τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου προστῆναι οὐκ οἶδεν, πῶς ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται (1 Tim 3:5). Cp. Philo, *Ios.* 8.38–39; Pliny, *Pan.* 83.1–5, where Pliny reflects upon how the reputations of many illustrious men have suffered due to their inability to maintain an ordered household.

as “an extended household” and its social order as arranged and maintained by the divine.<sup>75</sup> For example, the Stoic philosopher Arius Didymus described the house as “a kind of small city.”<sup>76</sup> According to Zamfir, the *ekklēsia*, even when described as a household, is a public space that mutually reinforces and is structured by the societal norms of the *polis* that are ideally harmonious with divine order.<sup>77</sup> Thus the Pastoral Epistles’ qualifications for men and women participating in the *ekklēsia*, which excluded women from exercising any authority over men, can be explained as much by the traditional social expectations regarding their differentiated gendered roles within the domain of civic politics as from the expected deference women were to show to men within the domain of the household as expressed in elite moral and philosophical discourses concerning household management.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> See Zamfir, “Is the *ekklēsia* a Household (of God)?,” 511–528; idem., *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 60–85. On the ancient conceptualization of the household as the essential building block of the city, see also, Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive*, 23–49; Verner, *Household of God*, 27–81.

<sup>76</sup> Stobaeus, *Flor.* 2.148: μικρὰ γάρ τις εἶναι πόλις ὁ οἶκος.

<sup>77</sup> See Zamfir, “Is the *ekklēsia* a Household (of God)?,” 511–28; idem., *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 60–85. Zamfir states that “the paradigm *ekklēsia* – *oikos Theou* defines the community of Christ-believers as a public, sacred, and cosmic space...The *ekklēsia* is the assembly and the community of the citizens of God’s *polis*, joining humans and heavenly beings. As such, it comes close to the Stoic idea of the cosmos as the *polis* of gods and humans, ruled by the supreme deity” (ibid., 84). On the Stoic idea of the cosmos as the *polis* of the gods, see ibid., 78–84; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 36.30–36. Zamfir’s view contrasts with a number of other scholars, including Jürgen Roloff, David Verner, Margaret Y. MacDonald, and Raymond Collins who have argued that for the Pastoral Epistles, the *ekklēsia* is a *private* space organized around the traditional assumptions about traditional household roles (see Zamfir, “Is the *ekklēsia* a Household (of God)?,” 511–13. Such analyses, Zamfir argues, “take insufficiently into account the fact that from a sociological perspective the *ekklēsia* is not a household, but a larger social entity constituted of several households, a community with a certain structure, with members and officials. Therefore, the *ekklēsia* is not a household, and 1 Timothy uses *oikos*-terminology as a metaphor for community” (ibid., 513).

<sup>78</sup> Of course, I do not mean to imply that all elite Roman discourse conceptualized women as unable to participate in aspects of the civic sphere of society. See for example the Stoic philosopher Musonius Rufus (fl. mid-late first century C.E.), who argued that women should be permitted to practice philosophy because the gods have given them the same capacity for reason as granted to men. The study of philosophy, according to Rufus, could better assist women in their management of the household and rearing of children, see Musonius Rufus, *Or.* 3 (“That Women Should Also Study

The fulfillment of these household duties (οἰκονομία) can be described as enacting *pietas* just as taking care of one's elderly relatives is in 1 Timothy 5:4, which I will discuss further below. Like the imperial house, the household of God can be understood as embodying *pietas* to the extent that its members dutifully fulfill their responsibilities befitting their roles, which have been ordained by God. As I shall discuss in the next section, the author subsumes a list of feminine qualities that coalesce with qualities of the ideal Roman matron under the domain of showing proper reverence toward God (θεοσέβειαν) (1 Tim 2:9–10).

### 1 Timothy 2:8–15: The Duties of Women in Household of God

Mary Rose D'Angelo astutely observes that “[g]ender orthodoxy emerges as a central concern of εὐσέβεια early in the [communal] code, and in a section explicitly concerned with the imperial order.”<sup>79</sup> Directly following the author's admonitions for the *ekklēsia* to pray on behalf of their imperial rulers (1 Tim 2:1–7), he proceeds to instruct both men and women about prayer and the behavior befitting of their respective genders:

Βούλομαι οὖν προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ ἐπαίροντας ὁσίους χεῖρας χωρὶς ὀργῆς καὶ διαλογισμοῦ. Ὡσαύτως [καὶ] γυναῖκας ἐν καταστολῇ κοσμίῳ μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς, μὴ ἐν πλέγμασιν καὶ χρυσίῳ ἢ μαργαρίταις ἢ ἱματισμῷ πολυτελεῖ, ἀλλ' ὃ πρέπει γυναῖξιν ἐπαγγελλομέναις θεοσέβειαν, δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν. Γυνὴ ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μανθανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ· διδάσκειν δὲ γυναικὶ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἄνδρος, ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ. Ἀδὰμ γὰρ πρῶτος ἐπλάσθη, εἶτα Εὐά. καὶ Ἀδὰμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη, ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ἐν παραβάσει

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Philosophy”). See also, Martha Nussbaum, “The Incomplete Feminism of Musonius Rufus, Platonist, Stoic, and Roman,” in *The Sleep of Reason: Erotic Experience and Sexual Ethics in Ancient Greece and Rome*, ed. Martha Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 283–326.

<sup>79</sup> D'Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια,” 160.

γέγονεν· σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας ἐὰν μείνωσιν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἁγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφροσύνης.

Therefore, I desire that men should pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without anger and dispute. Likewise, women should adorn themselves with respectable (κοσμίῳ) clothing with modesty and self-control (μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης), not with elaborate hairstyles, nor gold (χρυσίῳ), nor pearls (μαργαρίταις), nor costly apparel (ἱματισμῷ πολυτελεῖ), but through good works, which are fitting for women who profess piety toward God (θεοσέβειαν). Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to either teach or have authority over a man; rather she is to keep quiet. For Adam was formed first, and then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and came into transgression. But the woman will be saved through childbearing, if they remain in faith and love and holiness with self-control (σωφροσύνης) (1 Tim 2:8–15).

As D’Angelo and Standhartinger correctly note, these restrictions for women resonate with the moral and social concerns associated with Augustan legislation and imperial propaganda, which carries forward into the celebration of the modesty (*pudicitia*), concord (*concordia*), and piety (*pietas*) of the women in Trajan’s and Hadrian’s households.<sup>80</sup> Of course, imperial legislation and propaganda were not the only influential cultural domains in which the character of the ideal Roman matron or woman of virtue was constructed. This image of the modest, chaste, and pious wife was ubiquitous in Hellenistic Jewish literature, philosophical treatises, poetry, drama, monumental inscriptions, and gravestones.<sup>81</sup> And while these cultural

<sup>80</sup> See D’Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια,” 160; Standhartinger, “Eusebeia,” 80; see also, Portefaux, “Good Citizenship,” 155–57; Maier, *Picturing Paul*, 179–88.

<sup>81</sup> Susan E. Wood, *Imperial Women: A Study in Public Images 40 B.C.E. – A.D. 68* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (London: Random House, 1975). Maier (*Picturing Paul*, 186) directs our attention to one strikingly relevant second-century C.E. sarcophagus from Asia Minor that commemorates Procope, the wife of Publius Aelius Pompeius, for being “most pious and modest [and] chaste” (*piisimae[ue] pudicitiae castitatis*).



artifacts are significant and will be noted,<sup>82</sup> this study focuses upon how the author of 1 Timothy's use of *pietas* resonates with the family values endorsed by imperial legislation and propaganda in order to consider how this text could have been read as reflecting imperial propaganda in its construction of an ideal *ekklēsia*.

The author begins his patriarchal admonitions with instructions on how women who profess piety (θεοσέβεια) should dress when gathered for prayer in accordance with feminine virtues—virtues that also aligned with Roman social mores. The virtues of modesty (αἰδώς), and self-control or moderation (σωφροσύνη) were preeminent virtues associated with the idealized Roman matron in antiquity.<sup>83</sup> As Sarah Pomeroy attests, σωφροσύνη “is mentioned more frequently than any other quality on women’s tombstones.”<sup>84</sup> *Denarii* minted during the reign

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<sup>82</sup> See Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives*, 17–74. It is unnecessary to conclude which cultural domain had the most influence upon the Pastoral Epistles’ construction of the ideal woman. It is sufficient for the purposes of this study to recognize some of the different cultural domains beyond Roman legislation and propaganda that esteemed and thereby invested cultural value into a set of virtues associated with the ideal woman, without providing an in-depth analysis of each cultural analogue to the Pastoral Epistles. The cultural domain of imperial legislation and propaganda is given preference not because it originated this ideal, but rather because of its ability to diffuse a poignant image of a virtuous woman that both bore legal ramifications and encapsulated widespread cultural values. Many of the cultural analogues referenced below respond as well to these imperial images and values, thus establishing a complex cultural matrix of complementary, and sometimes competing, patriarchal images of the ideal woman.

<sup>83</sup> Like 1 Timothy 2, contemporary philosophers reminded women that their modesty and moderation was tied to their dress, see esp. Epictetus, *Disc.* 2.10.15; *Ench.* 40; Plutarch, *Conj. praec.* 10. On the gendered difference of σωφροσύνη for men and women, see Aristotle, *Pol.* 1.5.5–8. According to Aristotle, σωφροσύνη among men manifests in a self-control that enables their political roles as leaders, among women this virtue manifests modesty and chastity that corresponds to women’s subordination and supportive role within the social-political domain. See esp. Upson-Saia, *Early Christian Dress*, 15–32.

<sup>84</sup> Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt: From Alexander to Cleopatra* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 70; Malherbe, “The Virtus Feminarum in 1 Timothy 2:9–15,” in *Renewing Tradition: Studies in Texts and Contexts in Honor of James W. Thompson*, ed. Mark W. Hamilton, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Jeffery Peterson (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2007), 45–65. Note also the pseudepigraphal Pythagorean Epistle ascribed to “Phintys,” entitled *On the Modesty* (Σωφροσύνη) of a Woman.

of Hadrian associate the emperor's wife, Sabina, with the divine personification of Pudicitia, the Latin word for feminine σωφροσύνη.<sup>85</sup> Feminine modesty and moderation are contrasted with wearing elaborate hairstyles and expensive clothing, including gold and pearls: luxurious styles often associated with ostentatious elites, courtesans (ἑταῖραι), and prostitutes.<sup>86</sup> According to D'Angelo, 1 Timothy's "strictures voice the kinds of sumptuary concerns reflect[ed] in the moral strictures of the Augustan propaganda" and in traditional Roman sensibilities as expressed in Livy's account of Cato's debate with Valerius over the *lex oppia* which restricted the display of opulent feminine attire, including gold jewelry (Livy, *Urb. cond.* 34.1–8).<sup>87</sup> Such concerns also resonate with Plutarch's *Advice to Brides and Grooms*, when he describes the adornment (κόσμος) of women as lying in neither "gold" (χρυσὸς) nor other luxurious jewelry, but in dignity (σεμνότητος), good behavior (εὐταξίας), and modesty (αἰδοῦς).<sup>88</sup> In a culture where apparently "you are what you wear," 1 Timothy exhorts the female Christ-believers to dress for

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<sup>85</sup> *BMCRE* 3.911 p. 65.1.

<sup>86</sup> See Winter, *Roman Wives*, 103–8; Andrew Dalby, "Levels of Concealment: The Dress of *Hetairai* and *Pornai* in Greek Texts," in *Women's Dress in the Ancient World*, ed. Llyod Llewellyn-Jones (London: Duckworth, 2002), 111–124. According to Dalby, "dresses and gold," represent the standard dual accouterments of a *hetaira* (p. 115). As a poignant example, Winter (*Roman Wives*, 72) references the Neo-Pythagorean letter of Melissa to Kleareta (ca. first century C.E.) which states: "So then, the modest and free (σώφρονα καὶ ἐλεύθεραν) wife must live with her lawful husband, adorned with silence, dressed in clothing that is whitened, clean and simple, but not very expensive (πολυτελῇ) or excessive. For she ought to avoid garments of purple cloth, and those shot through with purple and gold. Since this sort is useful to courtesans (ἑταίραις) in their hunting of many men..." (*P.Haun.* II 13.5–11; Annette Huizenga, with modifications). See Annette Huizenga, *Moral Education for Women in the Pastoral and Pythagorean Letters* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

<sup>87</sup> D'Angelo, "Εὐσέβεια," 160. See also Pliny the younger's praise of Trajan's wife's modesty in attire (*modica cultu*; *Pan.* 83.7).

<sup>88</sup> Plutarch, *Conj. praec.* 141E.

success—a success found in virtues that are befitting of women living piously and modestly in the household of God. By describing these feminine qualities as befitting piety toward God (θεοσέβεια), social conventions are given divine legitimation with Christian theology.

In keeping with the predominately patriarchal values of its day, the Pastoral Epistles further put women in their place by forbidding their roles as teachers over men and encouraging their feminine roles as fertile mothers (1 Tim. 2:11–15). It is not the case that 1 Timothy prohibits women from teaching *primarily* because they lacked proper instruction and exhibited an inappropriate domineering attitude (αὐθεντέω) over men, as some biblical scholars including I. Howard Marshall, Philip H. Towner, and Ben Witherington have proposed.<sup>89</sup> However, as Korinna Zamfir has thoroughly demonstrated, 1 Timothy is in agreement with widespread patriarchal assumptions that expected women, as the weaker sex,<sup>90</sup> to conceal their voice and

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<sup>89</sup> See Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 452–60; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 212–24; Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 226–32. Towner is persuaded by Bruce Winter’s suggestion (see Winter, *Roman Women, Roman Wives*) that “Paul” is concerned with wealthy women who were attracted to an ostentatious lifestyle led by promiscuous “New” Roman women. Witherington has argued that at issue are high-status women patrons, who have felt entitled to authority and teaching roles within the fledgling community. Such roles were common for women of their standing to assume in the ancient world, especially in Ephesus where female cultic leaders of Artemis were quite visible. All three authors hold the admirable aim to vindicate the ministry of women as teachers in the church today. Cf. Johnson, *First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 198–211, esp. 208–11, who takes the striking position of simultaneously affirming that in this passage the historical Paul unequivocally prohibits women from teaching men, while nevertheless suggesting that the church should grow up from these parochial beginnings to a more progressive position that honors women’s teaching. For bibliography and an overview on this issue, see Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 94–149, whose interpretation, while rhetorically accurate, is theologically troubling for women.

<sup>90</sup> See Plato, *Rep.* 455E (Emlyn-Jones and Preddy, LCL): “but for all [the jobs of the state] the female is weaker than the male.” See also *idem.*, Tim. 42A.

presence in public spaces<sup>91</sup> and to submit to men's authority (cf. 2 Tim. 3:5–7).<sup>92</sup>

Women are prohibited from teaching men, not primarily because of the manner or content of their teaching, but because such a relationship of feminine authority over any man would upset the gendered duties that both society and the divine have ordained women to fulfill.<sup>93</sup> Men, too, must play their part as leaders and teachers over women in the household of God.<sup>94</sup> While provisions are made for older women to teach younger girls (Titus 2:4–5), they are to teach them not in doctrinal matters but in the finesse of being good housewives, nurturing such qualities as “self-control” (σώφρονας), “chastity” (ἀγνὰς), and being “good managers of the

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<sup>91</sup> See Plutarch, *Conj. praec.* 139C: “a moderate (τὴν δὲ σώφρονα γυναῖκα) woman ought to be most visible in her husband's company, and to stay in the house and hide herself when he is away (Babbitt, LCL).

<sup>92</sup> Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 161–260, esp. 191–231. On the need for women to learn at home in silence, see Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 3.169; Plutarch, *Conj. praec.* 142D; 145C–E. On the inferiority of women to learn, see Juvenal, *Sat.* 6.398–412; 434–456. On the dangers of treating women as equals, see esp. Livy's account of Cato's feelings on the matter in *Urb. cond.* 34.3.1–9: “Review all the laws with which *your forefathers restrained their license and made them subject to their husbands*; even with all these bonds you can scarcely control them. What of this? If you suffer them to seize these bonds one by one and wrench themselves free and finally to be placed on a parity with their husbands, do you think that you will be able to endure them? *The moment they begin to be your equals, they will be your superiors*” (Sage, LCL; emphasis mine).

<sup>93</sup> On the question of whether women were spreading heterodox teaching, see Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 179–194. Zamfir summarizes her own argument: “While certain women's willingness to espouse an alternative (probably Pauline) tradition can be supported by 2 Tim 3,7 and maybe also 1 Tim 5,13 the assumption that they were actually teaching a different (heterodox) doctrine stands on less firm ground...Even when all women would teach the doctrine defended by the author, the very fact that women publicly teach (i.e. exert a form of authoritative speech in the community and thereby assume a function assigned in contemporary society to men) is a sufficient reason for a traditionally-minded author to issue a general prohibition (p. 194–95). Similarly, D'Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια,” 161.

<sup>94</sup> On the husband's responsibility to teach his submissive wife, which is also analogous to 1 Tim 2:11; see Plutarch *Conj. praec.* 140D: “A wife ought not to make friends of her own, but to enjoy her husband's friends in common with him. The gods are the first and most important friends. *Wherefore it is becoming for a wife to worship and to know only the gods that her husband believes in*, and to shut the front door tight upon all *queer rituals and outlandish superstitions* (ξέναις δεισιδαιμονίαις). For with no god do stealthy and secret rites performed by a woman find any favor” (Babbitt, LCL; emphasis mine).

household” (οἰκουροῦς) and “submissive to their husbands” (ὑποτασσομενας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν).<sup>95</sup> In these ways, women can exhibit their *pietas* as exemplars of family values, “lest the word of God be blasphemed” (Titus 2:5).

1 Timothy 2:13–15 then justifies the subordination of women under male authority by appealing to the Genesis narrative of Eve’s deception by the serpent (Gen. 3). Men are superior, not only because of Adam’s priority (πρῶτος) in creation, but also since Adam was not deceived (ἡπατήθη).<sup>96</sup> No, it was the “woman” (γυνή), standing in for all women, who was *thoroughly* deceived (ἐξ-απατηθεῖσα) and transgressed against God.<sup>97</sup> This interpretation, according to Annette Merz, represents a misogynistic correction to the genuine Pauline use of this story in 2 Corinthians 11:3.<sup>98</sup> For Paul, Eve’s deception (ἐξαπατάω) by the serpent is an

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<sup>95</sup> Compare the advice given to young wives in the Pythagorean epistle, *Theano to Kallisto*: “but the teaching ought to come from the older women (πρεσβυτέρων) because they are forever giving advice about household management (οἰκονομίας)” (Annette Huizinga, *Moral Education*).

<sup>96</sup> On the *topos* of priority marking authority in antiquity, see Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 232–43.

<sup>97</sup> See Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 243–57. Pace Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 229. Witherington proposes that the author (i.e., the historical Paul) did not think women were inherently open to deception, but that Eve was not instructed. Witherington rightly notes the tension between this passage and the acceptance and presence of women in and around Paul’s ministry (pp. 230–32). However, his robust attempt to harmonize 1 Timothy 2:9–15 with the historical Paul’s view on women strains plausibility at many points.

<sup>98</sup> See Annette Merz, *Die Fiktive Selbstausslegung des Paulus: Intertextuell Studien zur Intention und Rezeption der Pastoralbriefe*, NTOA 52 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 344–58. Merz argues that the author of the Pastoral Epistles reinterprets 2 Cor. 2:3, along with other Pauline epistles (esp. 1 Cor. 8:11–16; 14:33–36 regarding 1 Tim 2:9–15), in order to provide his audience with the “correct” meaning of Paul’s teachings. For example, Merz argues that the significant parallels in vocabulary between 1 Tim 2:9–15 and 1 Cor 14:33–36 are best explained by postulating a direct literary relationship (p. 334) and a further corrective to the vocal and authoritative participation of women in the *ekklēsia* as indicated by 1 Cor. 11:2–6. For an overview of the differences and similarities between the historical Paul’s view on marriage and childbirth and the Pastoral Epistles, see Fatum, “Christ Domesticated,” 193–98.

archetype for the gullibility of both men and women in the Corinthian *ekklēsia*.<sup>99</sup> In contrast, the author of 1 Timothy uses Genesis 3 as the foundation text for establishing the vulnerability to deception inherent in women's gender, which justifies women's subordination to men and ultimately their exclusion from the public political sphere.<sup>100</sup> This patriarchal perception is echoed in the author's portrayal of women as gullible targets of heterodox teachers, who have a form of piety (μόρφωσιν εὐσεβείας) but lack its power (2 Tim 3:5).<sup>101</sup> Such women are silly, overwhelmed by desire (instead of reason), and are unable to discern true piety or arrive at knowledge of the truth despite their learning (2 Tim 3:6–7).

According to 1 Timothy 2:15, god-fearing women fulfill their “natural” and “created” duties when they bear children. Although Eve, and all women after her, may have been cursed because of transgression to experience great pain in labor, the author promises that she will be “saved” or “preserved” through labor if she continues in love, faith, and the cardinal feminine virtue of modesty (σωφροσύνης). This feminine duty receives such attention because, according to the author's inscribed rhetorical situation, some in the *ekklēsia* had renounced childbirth along with marriage (1 Tim. 4:3). The positive evaluation of childbirth is further carried

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<sup>99</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 234–35.

<sup>100</sup> So also, Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 256–57. For a contemporary analogue, see Philo, *QG* 1.33 (Marcus): “woman is more accustomed to be deceived than man. For his judgment, like his body, is masculine, and is capable of dissolving or destroying the designs of deception; but the judgment of the woman is more feminine, and because of softness she easily gives way and is taken in by plausible falsehoods which resemble truth.”

<sup>101</sup> 1 Timothy's caricature of the gullible (and perhaps promiscuous women) attracted to superstition evokes a literary *topos* found in Juvenal, *Sat.* 6, as noted in Ch. 1; see Matthews, *First Converts*.

out in the author's command for young widows to remarry and bear children (1 Tim. 5:14). Such admonitions for childbirth resonate with the pro-family legislation of Augustus, Trajan, and Hadrian surveyed in chapter 1. As D'Angelo notes, the author's encouragement for widows under sixty to remarry and beget children reflects Augustus's *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* that enticed elite widows under the same age to remarry and produce offspring.<sup>102</sup> As we have already seen, Trajan and Hadrian extended tax breaks to families and provision of public funds (*alimenta*) for poor children in order to encourage the flourishing of childbirth and families among their subjects.<sup>103</sup> Such benefactions coalesced with monumental images of children celebrating the fertility and fecundity secured through Trajan's reign as represented by the Arch of Beneventum in Rome.<sup>104</sup>

According to D'Angelo, that the values associated with the ideal Roman matron promoted in imperial self-presentation had disseminated into the "common discourse" of Rome's subjects is evidenced by the juxtaposition of piety and modesty found in 4 Maccabees' celebration of the virtuous mother of the seven martyrs. As a first- or early second-century C.E. Hellenistic Jewish expansion of 2 Maccabees,<sup>105</sup> 4

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<sup>102</sup> See D'Angelo, "Εὐσέβεια," 162; Portefaix, "Good Citizenship," 155; see chapter 1.

<sup>103</sup> See also Maier, *Picturing Paul*, 183–84.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 184–85. Maier describes this relief, providing his own interpretation: "Trajan stands with two small children, alongside a cornucopia and prow that symbolize fertility and fecundity. Here Mars behind the prow and probably Tellus in the background forcefully give both a geo-political and pro-family message. It was at the Temple of Mars Ultor on the Roman forum that young men were registered who had completed their coming of age ceremony — the replacing of the boyhood *toga praetexta* with the adult *toga virilis*" (pp. 184–85).

<sup>105</sup> On the issues of dating 4 Maccabees, see Jan Willem van Henten, *The Maccabean Martyrs as Saviors of the Jewish People: A Study of 2 & 4 Maccabees* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 73–82. Van Henten suggests a date after 70 C.E., while noting the methodological difficulty of dating this text.

Maccabees celebrates the victory of piety<sup>106</sup> and reason over against the emotions as exhibited by the noble martyrdoms of seven brothers, their mother, and an elder in defiance to the despotic Seleucid ruler, Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>107</sup> D'Angelo observes that the virtue of piety sometimes “takes on a Roman cast,” especially when it finds expression in the family love for one another and the brothers’ obedience to their mother.<sup>108</sup> The mother’s own feminine qualities align with those of the ideal Roman matron in her chastity, childbearing, and dutiful respect to her (deceased) husband. In 4 Maccabees 18:7–9 the mother recalls the preservation of her virginity from defilement, achieved by not leaving her father’s house until she was married to her husband. She had faithfully remained beside her husband and bore him seven children, whom she dutifully raised in line with the scriptural lessons that her

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<sup>106</sup> This piety, which goes hand-in-hand with reason (λόγος)—often as pious reason (εὐσεβὴς λογισμὸς), is described as being superior to the virtues of courage (ἀνδρεία), self-control (σωφροσύνη), and justice (δικαιοσύνη). Taken together, this list of four virtues perfectly matches Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ list of the four cardinal virtues (*Ant. rom.* 1.3.5) and roughly parallels the virtues associated with Augustus’ shield: *virtus* (ἀρετή), *clementia* (ἐπιείκεια), *iustitia* (δικαιοσύνη), and *pietas*. According to D’Angelo, this parallel further strengthens her suggestion that 4 Maccabees’ is familiar with the imperial claims to piety and virtue being explored in this chapter, see “Εὐσέβεια,” 142–4, 149–150, esp. 158 for a chart comparing different lists of virtues. Such parallels also suggest the 4 Maccabees’ familiarity of discourses about piety within philosophical literature, see chapter 5.

<sup>107</sup> The mother’s piety toward God is displayed in her brave witness of the trial, torture, and death of each of her boys, whom she did not attempt to hold back, but rather encouraged on in their own pious convictions. As 4 Maccabees 15:23 puts it: “pious reason (εὐσεβὴς λογισμὸς), giving her heart a man’s courage in the very midst of her emotions, strengthened her to disregard, for the time, her parental love” (*NRSV*, with my own modification).

<sup>108</sup> D’Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια,” 150. See esp. 4 Macc 13:23–14:1: “Therefore, when sympathy and brotherly affection had been so established, the brothers were the more sympathetic to one another. Since they had been educated by the same law and trained in the same virtues and brought up in right living, they loved one another all the more. A common zeal for nobility strengthened their goodwill toward one another, and their concord, because they could make their brotherly love more fervent with the aid of their piety (εὐσεβείᾳ). But although nature and companionship and virtuous habits had augmented the affection of family ties, those who were left endured for the sake of piety (εὐσέβειαν), while watching their brothers being maltreated and tortured to death” (*NRSV*, with modifications); see also 4 Macc. 15:8–10, 23–27.



husband had taught them (4 Macc. 8:9–19). In this manner, the Maccabean mother not only fulfills the Augustan legislation through guarding her chastity and bearing children,<sup>109</sup> but she even surpasses it by realizing “the Roman ideal of the *univira*,” which esteemed women whose faithfulness to their only husband was maintained even into widowhood.<sup>110</sup> 4 Maccabees’ response to the imperial promotion of *pietas* and traditional social values in its construction of the ideal Jewish matron buttresses the plausibility that 1 Timothy also reflects the pervasive influence of imperial ideology.

1 Timothy 2:8–15 then portrays its ideal Christian woman as modest, submissive to her husband, and procreative—all qualities that resonate with the ideal Roman matron promoted by Augustan legislation and propagandistic representations of the women of the imperial household. Such ideal feminine virtues characterize a woman who professes piety (1 Tim 2:10). That this piety is expressly directed toward God (θεο-σέβειαν), signals the overlap between the spheres of divine order and conventional social order that were also promulgated by imperial representations of the ideal Roman matron.

What remains to be explored is the significance and implications of this correspondence between the pious women of the household of God and the household of Caesar. How might we interpret 1 Timothy’s rhetoric of *pietas* and

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<sup>109</sup> D’Angelo expands her position: “This pair [chastity and childbearing] echoes the twin Roman concerns expressed in the Julian laws as well as numerous literary texts: control of female sexuality against adultery and *stuprum* (*lex Iulia de adulteriis*) and the requirement of marriage and remarriage for those of an age to produce children (*lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*)” (“Εὐσέβεια,” 156).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

construction of its ideal woman within the scope of its negotiation of the imperial situation and so move beyond flat readings of 1 Timothy as representing an accommodation to imperial social norms? But first, let us look at one last use of εὐσέβεια where notions of Roman *pietas* seem to be active—the duties of and due toward widows.

### 1 Timothy 5:3–16: The Duties of Widows within the Household of God

In 1 Timothy 5, the author returns to issues of *pietas*, the proper social order, and conduct of women in the household of God when he addresses the issue of too many widows (χήραι) relying upon the *ekklēsia* for support.<sup>111</sup> The author instructs widows' children to fulfill their duty of filial *pietas* (εὐσεβεῖν) toward their elderly parents or grandparents in taking care of them and not relying upon the charity of the community (1 Tim 5:14).<sup>112</sup> Refusing to provide for one's elderly relatives is not only a rejection of a piety pleasing to God, but a denial of the faith itself, making one worse than an unbeliever (1 Tim 5:4, 8). Thus, the fulfillment of filial duty is given divine legitimation. The author then turns to qualify who counts as a “real widow”

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<sup>111</sup> Portefaix notes that the Greek term, χήρα, can also denote women who had never been married (“Good Citizenship,” 156). Portefaix suggests that these χήραι could have been deserted by their pagan families (e.g., divorced by pagan husbands; cf. 1 Cor. 7:15), converted prostitutes (perhaps 2 Tim 3:6-7: women burdened with sins listening to heretical teachings), or poor women whose parents could not afford dowries (ibid., 156). See also G. Stählin, ‘χήρα,’ *TDNT* 9:440–465; Charlotte Methuen, “The ‘Virgin Widow’: A Problematic Social Role for the Early Church?,” *HTR* 90 (1997): 285–298, esp. 290; cf. Ignatius, *Pol.* 13.1.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Philo, *Decal.* 118–120, who describes obedience to parents as embodying the virtues of “piety and holiness, the chief of all virtues” (εὐσέβειαν δὲ καὶ ὁσιότητα, τὰς ἀρετῶν ἡγεμονίδας). However, piety is not directed toward parents/elders in this passage, but rather toward God, who is honored by those who honor their parents; cf. Standhartinger, “*Eusebeia*,” 71–72.

(ὄντως χήρα),<sup>113</sup> discounting those whose families ought to be supporting them or those under the age of sixty and still able to bear children from eligibility to enroll in the church's widow-in-need list (1 Tim 5:9–16). Those who meet these requirements ought to have been married only once, have brought up children, and be recognized for their dedication to good works (1 Tim 5:9–10). As noted above, that younger widows ought to remarry, bear children while they are still fertile, and manage their new households lest they learn to become idle gossips (1 Tim 5:11–15)<sup>114</sup> aligns with the pro-family legislation and propaganda surrounding Augustus, Trajan, and Hadrian.<sup>115</sup> Similar to the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, the author of 1 Timothy subordinates the traditional Roman virtue of *univira*<sup>116</sup> to the necessity for women to bear children. While 1 Timothy appears to recognize the conventional prestige accorded to the virtue of *univira*, as evidenced by the requirement for

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<sup>113</sup> On the problems the ambiguity among commentators on whether this entire section is cohesive and all pertains to the question of delineating “real widows” who should be supported by the church or whether “widow” here also connotes women who had taken a vow of chastity (and thus were overburdening the church's limited support), see Jouette M. Bassler, “The Widows Tale: A Fresh Look at 1 Tim 5:3–16,” *JBL* 103.1 (1984): 23–41.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. D'Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια,” 161, who interprets ἀργαὶ μανθάνουσιν (1 Tim 5:13) as lamenting the fact that widows are *learning*, while being idle, as opposed to learning *to be* idle as rendered in the *NRSV*. While this might indeed be a fear of the author, according to some reconstructions of the socio-rhetorical occasion for the letter, the Greek is better translated according to the *NRSV* as supported by the Coptic translation of this passage which reads ⲥⲉⲕⲓⲥⲱ ⲉⲡⲁⲣⲟⲥ, “learn to be idle.” On the strategy of accusing women of being “gossipy” in order to denigrate female authority and “reinscribe domestic female roles” in the Pastoral Epistles, see Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, *Gossip and Gender: Othering of Speech in the Pastoral Epistles* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 155–59; 204–10.

<sup>115</sup> So also Portefaix, “Good Citizens,” 156; D'Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια,” 162.

<sup>116</sup> On the importance of this Roman virtue, see Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*, 233–5; Majorie Lightman and William Zeisel, “Univira: An Example of Continuity and Change in Roman Society,” *CH* 45 (1977): 19–32.

widows receiving welfare from the *ekklēsia* to have been married only once,<sup>117</sup> it is uncertain how many widows would have lived to sixty at all given the average life expectancy and, in most cases, their limited financial support.<sup>118</sup>

### **The Opponents as Disrupters of the Household of God**

So how does the author's appeal to filial piety contribute to the author's broader socio-political aims? An explicit aim of 1 Timothy is to counteract the influence of heterodox teaching and practices within the *ekklēsia* (1 Tim 1:3–7). At the opening of the epistle, the author writing as Paul instructs Timothy to remain in Ephesus so that he might command “certain people” (τισὶν) not “to teach different doctrines” (ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν) nor attend to “myths, and endless genealogies” (μύθοις καὶ γενεαλογίαις ἀπεράντοις) (1 Tim 1:4). Such “heterodox” instruction that rivals the author's doctrine concerns itself with speculation (ἐκζητήσεις), rather than God's administration and ordering (οἰκονομίαν) of the world (1 Tim 1:4). Throughout the Pastoral Epistles, the author depicts the opponents as disruptive of the social order of the household, particularly within the domain of women. This rhetorical strategy denigrates his opponents' character and teachings to his audience. Furthermore, the author relies upon stock images of women, particularly free and noble women, breaking with their household duties as a foil

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<sup>117</sup> Bishops and deacons are also required to have been married only once (μίας γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ) (1 Tim 3:2, 12; 1 Tim 5:19; Titus 1:6).

<sup>118</sup> Carolyn Osiek points out the curious tension between the admonition for widows to remarry and the qualification for widows wanting to receive support to have only been married once. What happens if that second husband dies? Osiek wryly states, “She's damned if she does, and damned if she doesn't!” “*PIETAS*,” 170. Cf. D'Angelo, “*Εὐσέβεια*,” 162, who suggests, “these stipulations seem to aim at limiting the numbers almost to extinction.”

against which to promote his image of the ideal and pious Christian matron.

According to the author, some within the community threaten to undermine filial duties and the proper hierarchical relationships that constitute the household. In 2 Timothy 3:1–9, the author warns that in the last days, which constitute the present circumstances of the intended audience, vice will proliferate among humanity. He warns the *ekklēsia* to avoid rival teachers who are “disobedient to their parents” (γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς) and worm their way into households in order to “take captive foolish women, overwhelmed by their sins, and swayed by all kinds of desires” (2 Tim. 3:16).<sup>119</sup> In contrast to the author, these ambiguous antagonists are not pious, but only have an “outward form of piety, having denied its power” (μόρφωσιν εὐσεβείας τὴν δὲ δύναμιν αὐτῆς ἡρνημένοι) (2 Tim 3:5). Under the pretext of piety, the opponents in Titus “jeopardize entire households, teaching what ought not be taught, for the sake of shameful gain” (Titus 1:11).<sup>120</sup> Presumably, it is against such kinds of opponents that the Pastoral Epistles seek to shield their “impressionable” women, who should learn in silence from approved male teachers lest they be deceived (1 Tim 2:11–15). Further, these opponents forbid marriage, and consequently childbirth (1 Tim 4:3)—both essential elements for elite Roman conceptions of the ideal matron.

As Bruce Winter has successfully demonstrated, 1 Timothy 2:9–12’s prohibitions against ostentatious apparel and presumptuous behavior draw on a

<sup>119</sup> 2 Tim 3:6: αἰχμαλωτίζοντες γυναικάρια σεσωρυμένα ἁμαρτίαις, ἀγόμενα ἐπιθυμίαις ποικίλαις.

<sup>120</sup> Titus 1:11: οἵτινες ὅλους οἴκους ἀνατρέπουσιν διδάσκοντες ἃ μὴ δεῖ αἰσχροῦ κέρδους χάριν.

popular trope, which Winter has termed the “new” Roman wife. This “new” wife, in contrast to the “traditional” wife of the Roman Republic, exhibited her power through luxurious fashion and appropriated an elite male disposition of promiscuity afforded by her elite status and wealth.<sup>121</sup> According to Winter, it is against such sumptuary behavior associated with this negative caricature that the Augustan marriage legislation addressed its forceful prohibitions regarding adultery.<sup>122</sup> However, Winter’s conclusion that the women addressed in 1 Timothy 2:9–15 in fact embraced such an *avant-garde* lifestyle, with respect to their attention to fashion, resistance to subordination, and spurning of childbirth, is problematic.<sup>123</sup> As Harry O. Maier rightly counters:

It seems unlikely, however, that the audience would have comprised such wealthy women. It is more likely that the description functions as foil to the description that follows (vv. 13-15) of the silent, submissive and childbearing wife who dresses ‘modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel’ (1 Tim 2.13-

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<sup>121</sup> Winter, *Roman Wives*, 17–38. Winter builds his case for this trope upon a wide breath of evidence taken from ancient poetry, plays, legislation, and philosophical treatises (see also pp. 59–74). For example, see Seneca’s description of his mother, *Helv.* 16.3–4 (Basore, LCL): “Unchastity (*impudicitia*), the greatest evil of our time, has never classed you with the great majority of women; jewels have not moved you, nor pearls; to your eyes the glitter of riches has not seemed the greatest boon of the human race; you, who were soundly trained in an old-fashioned and strict household, have not been perverted by the imitation of worse women that leads even the virtuous into pitfalls; you have never blushed for the number of your children, as if it taunted you with your years, never have you, in the manner of other women whose only recommendation lies in their beauty, tried to conceal your pregnancy as if an unseemly burden, nor have you ever crushed the hope of children that were being nurtured in your body; you have not defiled your face with paints and cosmetics; never have you fancied the kind of dress that exposed no greater nakedness by being removed. In you has been seen that peerless ornament, that fairest beauty on which time lays no hand, that chiefest glory which is modesty (*pudicitia*).” For a Hellenistic Jewish example, see *T. Reu.* 5.5.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 39–58.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 119–22; followed by Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 48–49, 196, 219. Zamfir rightly critiques Winter’s approach, which “takes at face value ideologically coloured ancient sources that deplore the loss of a legendary golden age when women were obedient, domestic and chaste, in contrast to their contemporary peers who were immoral and domineering. Thus ideology and poetry are taken as hard facts” (*Men and Women in the Household of God*, 218).

15)... The Pastorals uses stereotype and caricature of women as a strategy to end or discredit female patronage of teachers the letters oppose.<sup>124</sup>

Thus in order to denigrate the position of women who do not agree with his vision of an ideal *ekklēsia*, the author rhetorically characterizes them as those who endorse attitudes contrary to hegemonic social conventions pertaining especially to gender and family duties. True believers in Christ, according to the author, maintain the highest (Roman) ideals of feminine modesty in their practice of piety (θεοσέβειαν).

Thus *pietas*, in conjunction with social order of the household, functions to demarcate boundaries between “true” insiders and those who should no longer be considered insiders. While the status of some within the community has become denigrated,<sup>125</sup> the author of the Pastoral Epistles’ position is both legitimated and vindicated as properly attending to God’s management of the world (1 Tim 1:4) and the instruction that accords with piety (1 Tim. 5:3).

### **Imitating Roman *Pietas***

As we saw in chapter one, coins minted in the early second-century C.E. signaled the cultural significance of *pietas*, alongside other domestic virtues including modesty (*pudicitia*) and harmony (*concordia*), as well as these virtues’ exemplary embodiment among the imperial family. The ideological message that the *pietas* of the imperial family secured the prosperity of provincial subjects became

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<sup>124</sup> Maier, *Picturing Paul*, 191. Maier adds, “The Pastorals are not so much a rejection of ‘new women,’ as they are a refusal to recognize the demographic realities of enterprising ones” (p. 191). On the role of women as patrons of false teachers, see chapter 4.

<sup>125</sup> See also Llyod K. Pietersen, “Despicable Deviants: Labeling Theory and the Polemic of the Pastoral Epistles,” *Sociology of Religion* 58 (1997): 343–52. Pietersen applies the sociological theories of Howard S. Becker and Harold Garfinkel to describe how the Pastoral Epistles construct deviance in transforming insiders to outsiders.

reified within the dissemination of these coins across the marketplaces of Asia. In return, the Emperor, as father over the nation (*pater patriae*), was due *pietas* in return for his faithful governance and saving benefaction. How might early Christians have responded to such imperial claims and expectations that were manifested not only upon coins, but also upon honorary inscriptions and monumental dedications from Roman nobility and wealthy elites? Reading the Pastoral Epistles as participating within a broader discourse on piety endorsed by imperial propaganda not only helps modern readers appreciate the cultural significance of this virtue, but also helps us to consider how the author of 1 Timothy's rhetoric of *pietas* legitimated his vision of the ideal *ekklēsia* against competing positions. In resonance with the imperial claims stamped upon these coins, 1 Timothy affirms that a pious life grounded within divine order is the basis for peace and prosperity.<sup>126</sup> However, what such piety and security/salvation (*salus*) entails is a matter of subtle negotiation.

The author's claim upon *pietas* aligns the *ekklēsia* with Rome's *mos maiorum* as exemplified by one of Rome's most esteemed national heroes, Pius Aeneas. As discussed in chapter 1, Aeneas's exemplary piety poetically demonstrated that *pietas* ran in Augustus's blood, thus supplying the grounds for justifying Augustus's fitness to reign. 1 Timothy, too, has its own hero to emulate in the figure of the apostle Paul, who also knows something about selfless piety. Just as Virgil's Aeneas

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<sup>126</sup> See also Standhartinger, "Eusebeia," 80: "With the Roman nobility of the second century, the Pastoral Epistles represent the thesis that a 'life in piety' according to godly order provides the basis for social prosperity and peace" (Mit der römischen Nobilität des 2. Jh. vertreten die Pastoralbriefe die These, dass ein 'Leben in Frömmigkeit' gemäß göttlicher Ordnung Grundlage des gesellschaftlichen Wohlstandes und des Friedens ist).



provides a pious patriarch of Rome to legitimate Augustus's reign, so also the Pastorals' Paul provides a pious exemplar that legitimates the doctrines and ecclesiastical structure endorsed by the author. The Pastorals' Paul not only possesses the sound teaching capable of imparting a life lived in true piety, but he himself embodies this piety and is willing to suffer persecution and prison for it (e.g., 2 Tim 1:8, 16; 2 Tim 3:11). The Pastorals' Paul observes, "Indeed, all who want to live piously (εὐσεβῶς ζῆν) in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim 3:12).<sup>127</sup> Within this passage, the author lays bare the dissonance between Christian piety and other claims to piety within the Roman world.<sup>128</sup> While the Pastorals' Paul may sit in a Roman prison, one gets the sense that the author feels that if only the outside world knew the "goods works" of the *ekklēsia*, Paul would be exonerated, at least within the judgments of outsiders.

In a manner of speaking, 1 Timothy provides an "open house" into the ideal *ekklēsia*, displaying its possession of *pietas* along with the dutiful behavior that follows from this virtue. Or to be more precise, the author attempts to persuade his inscribed audience to become the embodiment of *pietas* as portrayed within 1 Timothy both inside and outside their Christian assemblies. Within the "household of God," outsiders should expect to find: an *ekklēsia* loyally submissive to their

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<sup>127</sup> 2 Tim 3:12: καὶ πάντες δὲ οἱ θέλοντες εὐσεβῶς ζῆν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διωχθήσονται.

<sup>128</sup> It seems that the author likely has in mind persecutions that resulted from the instigation of Jewish opponents more than those that resulted from conflict with their polytheist neighbors or Roman authorities. When the author as Paul recalls his persecutions, he specifically mentions incidents that occurred in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra (2 Tim 3:11). The author likely references traditions known to Acts (e.g., Acts 13, 14), which portrays "unbelieving Jews" as the primary instigators of riots and persecutors of Paul and Barnabas (esp., Acts 13:45, 50; Acts 14:2, 5–6, 19;). Cf. 14:5, where Gentiles are also portrayed as scheming against Paul and Barnabas. However, it is unclear whether this scheming is independent of Jewish instigation.

ruling authorities (1 Tim 2:1–2; Titus 3:1), women modestly dressed and submissive before male authorities (1 Tim 2:9–12), older women teaching young wives to be submissive to their husbands and good mothers to their children (Titus 2:3–5), children and young adults respectful of their parents and elders (1 Tim 3:4, 5:1–2, 4, 8, 16), widows who are either remarried or virtuously celibate and devoted to prayer after having been noble mothers (1 Tim 5:5–6, 9–14), slaves obediently respectful of their masters (1 Tim 6:1–2; Titus 2:9–10), and in general, well-run households (1 Tim 3:5, 12; 5:14; Titus 2:5). According to the vision of the author, if outsiders were to take note of the teaching and behavior of the *ekklēsia*, they should have nothing but a “good report” (μαρτυρίαν καλὴν; 1 Tim 3:7) to relay to others.

Similar to Trajan’s wife Plotina, who is celebrated by Pliny for her “modesty in style of dress” (*modica cultu*)<sup>129</sup> and for carrying herself with silence (*cum silentio*),<sup>130</sup> the women of the household of God are to manifest their filial piety through their modesty and quiet obedience to their husbands and other male authorities. In resonance with the ideological principles of Augustus’s legislative reform, the Pastoral Epistles promote political and social stability in their restraint of sexual licentiousness (1 Tim 1:10; Titus 2:3–5) and encouragement of childbearing.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, the author instills in its members a set of philosophical virtues analogous to those ascribed to Augustus as engraved upon his *clipeus virtutum* and recounted in his *Res gestae*. According to Titus 2:11–12, the

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<sup>129</sup> Pliny, *Pan.* 83.7.

<sup>130</sup> Pliny, *Pan.* 83.8; see also his praise of Trajan’s sister, Ulpia Marciana, and the harmonious home that is maintained between the two sister-in-laws, *Pan.* 84.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Horace, *Carm.* 3.24.27–19.

grace of God educates (παιδεύουσα) the *ekklēsia* to avoid impiety (ἀσέβεια) and to lead lives in a self-controlled (σωφρόνως), just (δικαίως), and pious (εὐσεβῶς) manner.<sup>132</sup> As a result of the pervasive association of *pietas* with imperial domination and the emperor's household within the domain of imperial propaganda, *pietas* had acquired an increased cultural currency and relevancy as a publically esteemed symbol. *Pietas* had come to symbolize an essential element for social prosperity and peace within both the microcosm of the household and the macrocosm of the empire. Those who possessed this virtue were part of the solution to whatever ailed the domestic family and the wider *familia* of Roman Empire. The author trades upon the cultural currency of piety along with other Roman ideals in order to naturalize and build consensus around his vision of an *ekklēsia* that is persuasive to insiders and non-offensive and even compelling to outsiders.

Furthermore, I suggest that 1 Timothy's rhetoric of *pietas* and representation of the *ekklēsia* as the household of God becomes more intelligible when read in light of the negative stereotypes and suspicions elite Romans like Pliny, Tacitus, and Suetonius that stigmatized Christians as a seditious and foreign superstition. 1 Timothy deflects such negative caricatures of believers in Christ as subversive to Roman authority and societal values by projecting impious traits suspected of Christians to his inscribed rivals. These opponents served as foil for the author's

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<sup>132</sup> Cf. 1 Tim 6:11. A similar list of virtues appears in both Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 1.3.5 and 4 Macc 1:1–7, in no particular order: ἀνδρεία (courage), σωφροσύνη (self-control), δικαιοσύνη (justice), and εὐσέβεια (piety). For a helpful chart of comparison between these different iterations of the philosophical cardinal virtues, see D'Angelo, "Εὐσέβεια," 158. It is likely that each of these iterations of the cardinal virtues are influenced by a broader philosophical stream of discourse running through Plato, Philo, and to the Pastoral Epistles, see Mott, "Greek Ethics," 22–48; see chapter 6.

presentation of the *ekklēsia* as a socially respectable group and loyal to the emperor. Like Josephus and 4 Maccabees, the Pastoral Epistles seek to instill and provide language and behavior among their respective communities that will address and ideally ameliorate public suspicions and stereotypes against their ways of life. As D’Angelo elaborates, “Jews and Christians under Rome, who were usually short of ancestry, wealth and military exploits, found domestic virtue an excellent basis of appeal against imperial wrath.”<sup>133</sup> Believers in Christ support the empire, not only by praying for its emperor and other ruling authorities, but also through their promotion of households that excel in *pietas* and other Roman family ideals: their wives are models of Roman matrons in their modesty, childbearing, and submissiveness and even their slaves go above and beyond their duties of service.

The author’s negotiation of its imperial situation involves a subtle strategy of camouflaging the *ekklēsia*’s distinctive monotheism, which prohibited participation in social and political gatherings tainted by idolatry,<sup>134</sup> underneath the mask of recognition and prestige signified by *pietas*. As a number of scholars have observed, 1 Timothy does not launch a direct critique of Roman imperial power. Even references to the *ekklēsia*’s worship of the singular and only God (1 Tim 1:17; 2:5; 6:17) are made plainly without overtly polemicizing against either the imperial cult or local temples. And while there is much about Greco-Roman societal conventions and ideology that 1 Timothy affirms, the author’s commitment to the “glorious gospel of the blessed God,” who is “the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only

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<sup>133</sup> D’Angelo, “Εὐσέβεια,” 145.

<sup>134</sup> See MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire*, 40, quoted in chapter 1.

God” (1 Tim 1:11, 17), is distinctive. This commitment, Towner has emphasized, is tied to a “missiological” outlook that understands that the goal of pious instruction is to persuade a sinful world to receive the “mercy” and “the grace of our Lord” and to “believe in [the Lord] for eternal life” (1 Tim 1:12–17).<sup>135</sup> With Witherington, I agree that 1 Timothy’s affirmation of societal norms by no means represent some “banal and weak capitulation” to societal pressures.<sup>136</sup> After all, as Zamfir suggests, the author does not *concede* to social conventions for the sake of constructing an *ekklēsia* appealing to outsiders, but in fact, *shares* these cultural assumptions and norms.<sup>137</sup> While 1 Timothy does not hide its commitment to Jesus Christ, neither does it *stress* that this distinction presents a polemical *difference* from Roman *mores* or social conventions. The moment of negotiation then resides in the author’s strategic imitation of Roman *pietas* and his endorsement of its embodiment within the life and social order of the *ekklēsia* as an essential quality of the Christian life and doctrine.

The rhetorical function of piety within the Pastoral Epistles and especially 1 Timothy relies upon the ambiguity of the author’s mimetic use of Roman *pietas*. The rhetoric achieves success among outsiders when the cultural prestige of *pietas* and its manifestation within the well-run household of the *ekklēsia* are recognized and

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<sup>135</sup> Towner, *Goal of Our Instruction*, 169–99, esp. 177–78, 189; idem., *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 68–70. See also, C. K. Barrett, *Pastoral Epistles in the New English Bible* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 82; Jerome Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, AB 35 (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 289; Chiao Ek Ho, “Mission in the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Terry L. Wilder (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), 241–67.

<sup>136</sup> Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 150.

<sup>137</sup> Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 397.

so prejudicial perceptions are disrupted. At stake for the author is the *ekklēsia*'s ability to navigate an imperial situation where Christians faced possible social ostracism, exclusion, imprisonment, and even execution on account of elite Roman prejudicial stereotypes. The author's claim to Roman *pietas* then provides his audience with a strategic tool useful for defending and marketing the *ekklēsia* to outsiders.

However, the author's rhetoric of *pietas* comes at a cost, especially for those who may have disagreed with his views on the place of either women or slaves within the community. The author effectually supplies divine legitimation for social stratification by exhorting women and slaves to fulfill *pietas* in maintaining their duties appropriate to their subordinate roles in the household of God. Women must submit to men and because of their innate gullibility they cannot be trusted with the responsibility of the passing on the apostolic "deposit" (παραθήκη)<sup>138</sup> to the *ekklēsia*. Slaves must retrain their theological imagination for new possibilities of egalitarian relationships and serve their masters, especially their believing masters, with all the more vigor and respect. Whatever existential difference was afforded slaves who may have imagined their service as a benefaction to their masters,<sup>139</sup> they are nevertheless subordinated, and perhaps even more diabolically so, to their owners.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> See 1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:12, 14.

<sup>139</sup> Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 379–90.

<sup>140</sup> Does the author's description of the slaves' service as a benefaction (εὐεργεσία), and therefore as benefactors to their masters, place slaves in "a position of power; nobility and honor" (Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 390), or simply patronize the slave's position? I lean toward the latter

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have sought to demonstrate how Roman *pietas* manifests itself within the Pastoral Epistles, especially 1 Timothy. To the extent that *pietas* signals a faithful disposition to fulfill one's obligations to deities, the emperor, fatherland, and family, this virtue is evidenced in the author's instruction for the *ekklēsia* to pray on behalf of the imperial authority and for women and slaves to fulfill their appropriate duties befitting their devotion to God, the Father and Master of all. In accordance with Augustan and later imperial ideals, the women of the Pastoral Epistles are to be the epitome of matronly modesty (*pudicitia*), in their humble dress, chastity, dignity, silence, childbearing, submissive obedience to their husbands, and commitment to remarry if widowed. Furthermore, the image of the household operates as a governing model for 1 Timothy, casting a vision of the world, including both domestic and civic spaces, as interconnected and divinely ordered by God. By fulfilling their pious duties, the *ekklēsia* is able to secure not only harmony within its community, but also contribute to the wider prosperity and salvation of the Empire. According to Harry O. Maier, the author of the Pastoral Epistles invites audiences "to picture themselves as participants in the civic order, albeit as Christ followers."<sup>141</sup> Maier eloquently continues:

In this respect, the church the Pastorals seek to create and govern is a kind of empire in miniature; as the presence of the emperor and the rule of law he represents can be relied upon to bring good order and harmony wherever his image and that government that embody it are present, so Christ can be

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suggestion that the author's description of the slave's duties in honorable terms sugarcoats and maintains the status quo of domination.

<sup>141</sup> Maier, *Picturing Paul*, 164.

expected to bring virtue and concord wherever he is rightly worshiped and believers, rightly organized, conduct themselves according to the instructions laid out by Paul... they imitate [language analogous to the imperial cult] and, through imitation, seek a common good that could be seen pictured all around them on monuments, reliefs, and inscriptions representing the ideals of harmonious civic life.<sup>142</sup>

Maier's summary of the Pastoral Epistles accords with my analysis above. *Pietas*, as one of the organizing principles of 1 Timothy's vision of the household of God, brings together the moral values of the Empire of Caesar and the Kingdom of God under one "roof." Through the "sound teachings" of Jesus Christ that accord with εὐσέβεια, the *ekklēsia* becomes disciplined and exemplary in the virtues of moderation and modesty, justice, and piety (Titus 2:12). In this sense, the Pastoral Epistles may stand as precursors, perhaps even models, for the later apologetic appeals of the second-century apologists Justin<sup>143</sup> and Tertullian,<sup>144</sup> who claimed that Christian piety enabled Christians to serve the emperor better than others.

While the author of 1 Timothy's polemical aim is directed against rival teachers, the specters of empire haunt and perhaps scare straight the author's admonitions for a household order bristling with *pietas*. Just as cultural critiques of Judaism framed the historical-rhetorical impetus for Josephus's negotiation of Jewish identity and piety before a Roman audience, so similarly do suspicions surrounding believers in Christ as beholden to a foreign and potentially subversive

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<sup>142</sup>Ibid., 164.

<sup>143</sup> Justin, *1 Apol.* 12–17.

<sup>144</sup> Tertullian, *Apol.* 33. See esp. *Apol.* 33.1 (Glover, Rendell, LCL, with my own modifications): "But why should I say more about the religious awe (*religione*) and the piety (*pietate*), of Christians toward the Emperor? We must respect him as the chosen of our Lord. So I have a right to say, Caesar is more ours than yours, appointed as he is by our God."



superstition contrary to the *mores maiorum* frame the author's apologetic construction of the belief and behavior of the *ekklēsia*.<sup>145</sup> Like Josephus, the author's relationship to empire with respect to his imitation of values endorsed by imperial culture can be described as one of strategic ambiguity: a dialectical mode of existence between the opposing forces of accommodation and deliberate deviance or resistance. Although D'Angelo does not use the language of negotiation, she approximates it when she states: "accommodation and resistance are not separate but mutually dependent reactions. Accommodation is proffered to protect resistance, lest [their] resistance fall into disrepute and lose its effect."<sup>146</sup> D'Angelo goes on to describe the Pastoral Epistles' dialectic position as an admirable response to the imperial policies reflected in Pliny's letter to Trajan (*Ep.* 10.96–97) that, on the one hand, discouraged authorities from seeking out Christians, while on the other, sentenced them to death, "for the name alone," if arrested for other charges.<sup>147</sup> As we have seen above, the Pastoral Epistles imitate language associated with the imperial cult and family values that resonate with the imperial propaganda

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<sup>145</sup> Similarly, see Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 148–49: "There was a particular [Roman] concern about women who got involved in foreign cults and neglected their family duties, and there was also a serious and ongoing fear of slave revolts (e.g., like the Spartacus revolt). Since there were a considerable number of women and slaves involved in the Christian movement, it is not a surprise that churches gave special attention to their behavior to make sure that the Christian witness would not suffer because of their actions." So also, Portefaix, "Good Citizenship," 151, 157: "...with the suspicion that Christianity was a revolutionary sect in mind, it was important for the author to convince the authorities that Christian leaders were no revolutionaries....In commanding these women to marry and bear children, even if they belonged to groups outside the jurisdiction of the Augustan laws, he was sure to persuade the Roman authorities that Christians were compliant to the requirements of the Roman authorities and were eager to be integrated into Roman society."

<sup>146</sup> D'Angelo, "Εὐσεβεία," 163.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 164. On the persecution of Christians, see the classic treatment by A. N. Sherwin-White, "The Early Persecutions and Roman Law Again," *JTS* 3 (1952): 199–213.

marked on monuments and coins. However with every imitation there remains difference and distinction. For the Pastoral Epistles, this difference is found in its celebration of both God and Jesus Christ as the savior of the world (1 Tim 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; 2 Tim 1:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10, 13; 3:4, 6), whose mercy, goodness, and kindness surely inspired some “difference” in how members of the household treated one another. However, *what* this difference entailed with respect to how men treated women or masters treated slaves is difficult to know with any certainty. Whatever ethical qualifications may have attended how the author envisions men and masters treating women and slaves within the *ekklēsia*, the Pastorals nevertheless reinscribe structures of hierarchy and domination detrimental to women and slaves. It is appropriate to describe the Pastoral Epistles, especially 1 Timothy, as constructing hybrid identities negotiating the demands of two kingdoms. Indeed, this image of hybridity is perhaps most potent when we juxtapose the admonitions of 1 Timothy with 2 Timothy’s imagined scene of composition. Even though the apostle is imprisoned in Rome and bound with chains in 2 Timothy,<sup>148</sup> Paul nevertheless exhorts Timothy to hold on to the sound teaching (2 Tim 1:13; cp. 1 Tim 6:3), which presumably concerns the embodiment of *pietas* and other Roman family values in devotion to “the only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Tim 6:15).

While the coins, inscriptions, monuments, and literature praising the *pietas* of the Roman Emperor and his household provide a significant cultural context for understanding the potential social and political functions of the Pastoral Epistles’

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<sup>148</sup> See esp. 2 Tim 1:8, 16–17; 2:9.

rhetoric of piety, they are by no means the only cultural materials relevant for this study. As we saw with the poets of the early principate, Roman subjects responded back to Empire. Beyond poetry supported by the principate and the claims of a set of pseudonymous epistles, appeals to piety abounded in the Roman Empire within a variety of social-cultural domains ranging from the honoring of provincial benefactors to philosophical circles. I argue and will proceed to demonstrate that appeals to piety within the context of socio-political struggles for honor and legitimization among both wealthy patrons (Part II) and philosophers (Part III) reflect and respond to imperial claims of piety. By bringing together these intersecting cultural domains wherein appeals to piety are made, we can begin to provide a fresh contextualization of how the Pastoral Epistles' claims to piety become intelligible within the author's ancient cultural milieu.

The Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety constitutes a subtle negotiation of its imperial situation. The Pastoral Epistles' imitation of Roman *pietas* functions to 1) denigrate members of the *ekklēsia* whose socio-political vision for the community contrasts with his own, and 2) articulate an ideal *ekklēsia* recognizable to outsiders and useful for insiders to undercut prejudice and compel potential converts. However, we have just barely begun to observe the nuances and rhetorical scope of the Pastoral Epistles appeal to its Greco-Roman cultural values. Indeed, the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety served a much more expansive legitimating service that is only appreciable in an exploration of the way in which piety is deployed in other contemporaneous cultural artifacts and discourses. There is still more to be said about the Pastoral Epistles' rhetorical construction of its opponents, its demarcation

of boundaries of “orthodox” belief and praxis, and its self-representation as a loyal and civilized community that will become observable in the analyses and arguments in the chapters to follow.

### Chapter Three

#### *Civic Piety: Εὐσέβεια and Ideologies of Civic Benefaction*

How might public displays of piety within the ancient provincial cityscape inform our understanding of the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety? In this chapter, I explore what claims to piety found in honorary inscriptions commemorating the benefaction and service of elites might illuminate about the broader cultural assumptions concerning wealth, patronage, and authority that framed 1 Timothy's admonitions to the wealthy and defamation of rival teachers (1 Tim. 6:3–19). We have already seen how *pietas* was used in imperial propaganda and ascribed to Roman emperors and their households upon coins, statues, reliefs, and honorary inscriptions throughout the first and second centuries C.E. This representation of the emperor and his family as "pious" functioned to legitimate and naturalize the authority and status of the principate. We should not be surprised then to discover other cultural domains where this tactic of legitimization was not only deployed, but also (mutually) strengthened by the prestige that *pietas* accrued within imperial discourse.<sup>1</sup> When we turn to honorary inscriptions, we will find that the public commemoration of the εὐσέβεια of elites not only functioned to legitimate their honorable status amid other elites competing for honor, but also reinforced broader

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, we need not imagine a strict center-to-margin model of influence with respect to spread of claims to piety within the Roman Empire. Rather we should imagine multiple, intersecting cultural domains whose respective claims to piety reinforce the perceived cultural value of this virtue.

ideological assumptions about the moral competency of the elite as the ideal leaders and citizens of the city.

In order to better understand these socio-political dynamics that framed the rhetoric of piety within the domain of civic politics, I turn to a set of inscriptions in Ephesus commemorating the early-second-century C.E. benefaction of Salutaris. These inscriptions, engraved upon prominent walls of Ephesus' monumental theater and of the Temple of Artemis, promote Salutaris's foundation of an annual lottery and his benefaction of new images for Artemis's procession. Additionally, they celebrate his piety (εὐσέβεια) toward the goddess and the imperial family or the Augusti (Σεβαστοί).<sup>2</sup> While it would be fascinating to imagine how early Christians may have interpreted public displays of piety that marked their urban cityscapes, the present study seeks to analyze how the rhetoric of piety operative within honorary inscriptions is indicative of ideological assumptions about status, virtue, and wealth which undergirded elite benefaction and its public commemoration.<sup>3</sup> As I will demonstrate, the portrayal of individuals as pious within honorary inscriptions communicated a cultural prestige that encapsulated an honorable status and reinforced Greek and Roman ideological assumptions about who in the

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<sup>2</sup> Guy MacLean Rogers, *The Sacred Identity of Ephesos: Foundation Myths of the Roman City* (London: Routledge, 1991), 173.

<sup>3</sup> It is therefore not detrimental to this study that most early Christians would have had difficulty reading these inscriptions given the rates of illiteracy within the ancient Mediterranean culture. On the topic of literacy in early Christian communities, see Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 1–41. Furthermore, the location of some of these inscriptions both obfuscated their legibility and perhaps prohibited their accessibility. For example, the Salutaris inscription on the southern wall of the theater entrance was placed well above eye-level, making it difficult to read (see Rogers, *Sacred Identity of Ephesos*, 20–21; for diagrams and images see 198–199). Also, one might suppose that the majority of early Christians would have been reticent to spend much time admiring the inscriptions associated with temples that they associated with idolatry.

ancient world was worthy of honor and fit to lead others.<sup>4</sup> In the next chapter, I will discuss how the rhetoric of piety within monumental dedications as framed by such ideological assumptions about the social order illuminate the social and political interventions that the author of 1 Timothy hoped to make when he chastised others for misappropriating appeals to piety for their own profit and social mobility (1 Tim 6:5) and admonished rich benefactors who were possibly patronizing them (1 Tim 6:17–19).

### THE PIOUS BENEFACTION OF SALUTARIS TO THE EPHESIAN ARTEMIS

Gaius Vibius Salutaris was a wealthy and well-connected aristocrat of the equestrian order whose administrative and military career flourished during the reign of Domitian and early second century C.E. Born a Roman citizen, Salutaris was granted the honor of Ephesian citizenship and elected to the city's council (βουλή). It is known from another inscription that Salutaris held two administrative positions in the Greek-speaking province of Sicily: a manager of tax-collectors (*promagister portuum provinciae Siciliae*) and supervisor of rent collected from

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<sup>4</sup> My attention to the cultural prestige that accompanies claims to piety and legitimates hierarchies of power and domination is influenced by Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "symbolic capital," see, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (trans. Richard Nice; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 178–79; Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (trans. Richard Nice; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 291. Furthermore, on the helpfulness of thinking with Bourdieu when considering the ways in which elite Romans sustained their relations of domination, see Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 19–28. For Ando, Bourdieu's notions of *habitus* and *doxa* are effectively equivocal to a notion of ideology, in so far as both signify a flexible set of beliefs, embodied in practice, that symbolically represent and regulate social relationships and hierarchies (ibid., 21, 23).

public land (*promagister frumenti mancipalis*).<sup>5</sup> Whether on account of his financial abilities, noble pedigree, or official positions, Salutaris had established quite the network of powerful friends.<sup>6</sup> Two of these friends, the proconsul C. Aquillius Proculus and the legate of Asia P. Afranius Flavianus, would endorse Salutaris's deed of gift (διάταξις) and recommend that the city council (βουλή) and people (δῆμος) of Ephesus properly honor Salutaris for his pious benefaction.<sup>7</sup>

In 104 C.E. Salutaris, in consultation with the Ephesian βουλή and with the approval of the δῆμος, dedicated numerous type-statues (ἀπεικονίσματα) and 20,000 denarii as an endowment in honor of the Great Goddess Artemis. The statues molded in gold and silver ranged from the Ephesian Artemis, the Emperor Trajan, his wife Plotina, the Senate, the Roman equestrian order, the Roman δῆμος, and representations of the founding Greek tribes of Ephesus, including the recently established tribe of the Sebaste.<sup>8</sup> In accordance with Salutaris's stipulations, these type-statues were to be paraded from the Temple of Artemis to Ephesus' civic center and back during the celebration of the city's numerous festivals, sacred

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<sup>5</sup> Rogers, *Sacred Identity of Ephesos*, 17. Rogers also notes that Salutaris's military career stationed him in Mauretania Tingitana in Northwestern Africa and Moguntiacum in the province of Belgica (modern Germany and northern France) where he held the offices of prefect of the cohort of the Astures and Gallacei (*praefectus of cohors Asturum et Callaecorum*). He also served as a military tribune within the 22<sup>nd</sup> Legion, and the rarely-attested position of *subprocurator* (p. 17).

<sup>6</sup> These friends include: C. Aquillius Proculus, the proconsul of Asia in 103/4 C.E.; P. Afranius Flavianus the legate of Asia in 103/4 C.E.; L. Nonius Calpurnius Torquatus Asprenas, proconsul of Asia in 107/8 C.E.; and M. Arruntius Claudianus, a senator from the equestrian order. For a brief account of what is known about these illustrious elite, see Rogers, *Sacred Identity of Ephesos*, 18.

<sup>7</sup> *IEph* 27:333–369 (C. Aquillius Proculus); *IEph* 27: 370–413 (P. Afranius Flavianus).

<sup>8</sup> *IEph* 27.22–31. See also James Oliver's helpful catalogue of each of the 29 (and in addition two supplemental) type-statues and to whom each are dedicated in *The Sacred Gerousia* (Hesperia Supplement 6; Baltimore: American School of Classics at Athens, 1941), 83.



gatherings, and regular assemblies.<sup>9</sup> As for the endowment, each year on Artemis's birthday, the interest generated from the investment would be distributed either directly or through a lottery to the βουλή, council of elders (γερουσία), various priesthoods and ritual professionals (e.g., Ἀσιαρχήσαντες, ἱέρεια, θεολόγοι, ὕμνωδοί, νεωποιοί), citizens, and young citizens in training (ἔφηβοι).<sup>10</sup> In order that these stipulations remain preserved in perpetuity, hefty fines of 25,000 denarii were threatened against those who would either rescind or change any aspect of Salutaris's foundation.<sup>11</sup> Thus, Salutaris's piety toward Artemis and generosity toward the city would be publically staged before the Ephesian populace at regular intervals throughout the ritual calendar year, roughly every two weeks, reaping for his legacy a supposedly ever-lasting honor and glory.

So that Salutaris's "piety toward the goddess and the Augusti" (τε πρὸς τὴν θεὸν εὐσεβειαν καὶ τὴν τοὺς Σεβαστοὺς) and his "goodwill toward the city" (τὴν πρὸς τὴν πόλιν εὐμένιαν)<sup>12</sup> might be perfectly clear to all, the city council approved Salutaris's request for his foundation (διάταξις)<sup>13</sup> to be inscribed upon the theater's

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<sup>9</sup> *IEph* 27.48–55. All the statues would be stored in the Temple of Artemis, except for the statues of Trajan and Plotina. Salutaris would personally take care of these imperial statues in his own home (*IEph* 27.153–54).

<sup>10</sup> See Oliver's catalogue, *Sacred Gerousia*, 84.

<sup>11</sup> *IEph* 27.108–117; 321–325; 358–365.

<sup>12</sup> *IEph* 27:366–368.

<sup>13</sup> According to Rogers, διάταξις is probably a Greek translation for *constitutio* and functioned as a legal technical term that signaled a testament or deed of gift that directed how annual allocations of public funds should be spent (*Sacred Identity of Ephesos*, 24).

southern entrance (παράδος) wall and upon the Temple of Artemis.<sup>14</sup> However, to the illiterate eye, the clarity of this message was demonstrated more by its sheer length than its legibility. Written in a small, but professional, font (ranging from 1–4 cm), the inscription was set well above eye level. Its length ranged from two to four meters as it elevated up the slanted wall at a width of nearly five meters. This lengthy inscription included not only Salutaris’s foundation itself, but also six other documents, including its ratification by the δῆμος and βουλή, its endorsement from C. Aquillius Proculus and P. Africanus Flavianus, two resolutions made by the βουλή concerning the duties of the gold-bearers (χρυσοφοροῦντες), and a final addendum regarding the addition of two more gold-gilded silver images dedicated by Salutaris. At an impressive 568 lines, this monumental honorary inscription was intended to ensure that Salutaris’s contributions were properly recognized and carried out smoothly and to make a lasting impression upon its viewers.

The expressed purpose of publicizing Salutaris’s foundation upon the theater and temple of Artemis is for Salutaris’s “generosity toward the city and piety toward the goddess to be clear” (δὲ τὸ φανερὰν γενέσθαι τὴν τε πρὸς τὴν πόλιν μεγαλοψυχίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν θεὸν εὐσέβειαν τὴν ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ).<sup>15</sup> It is important to observe that within the same breath of celebrating Salutaris’s piety, the “affection of genuine citizenship” (στοργὴν γνησίων πολειτῶν) expressed through munificence

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<sup>14</sup> *IEph* 27:123–25. The inscription from the theater is preserved in the British Museum, while the inscription from the Temple of Artemis is only known to us from the former.

<sup>15</sup> *IEph* 27:117–120.

(φιλοτείμος)<sup>16</sup> is also praised.<sup>17</sup> Salutaris is recognized for “acting pious in a generous manner” (εὐσεβῶν μὲν φιλοτείμως) toward Artemis the founder (ἀρχηγέτιν) of Ephesus along with his “generous dedications” by which he has “honored the city in every way” (μεγαλοψύχοις δὲ καθιερώσεσιν τὴν πόλιν κατὰ πᾶν ἐτείμηκεν).<sup>18</sup> In these passages the concepts of piety and generous benefaction are connected and presented as virtues of an ideal citizen—an ideal that was accessible particularly to the wealthy.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, Salutaris’s benefactions were associated with piety in the ceremonial presentation of his dedicated statues at each of the assembly meetings in the theater. By decree of the βουλή, the gold-bearers who carry the type-statues into the assembly are to sit in the esteemed first sector of the theater, adjacent to the statue of Pietas herself!<sup>20</sup> Thus in inscribed marble and ritualized seating arrangements, the virtue of piety was associated with the performance of genuine citizenship and generous beneficence.

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<sup>16</sup> Φιλότημος (or φιλότιμος according to its lexical dictionary entry) more literally translates to “loving of honor” and often signifies an ambitious zeal. However, in honorary inscriptions, the term is common and as a noun connotes “generosity,” lacking any negative charge as found in classical philosophical literature (cf. Euripides, *Phoen.* 567; Pindar, *Fragments* 210; Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 1125b); see Danker, *Benefactor*, 328–29. Cf. Dio Chrysostom, *De lege* (*Or.* 75), who describes private benefactors of cities as ‘φιλοτιμουμένοις,’ which suggests, alongside of its prevalence in honorary inscriptions, what a stock term this had become to describe benefactors.

<sup>17</sup> *IEph* 27:8–9.

<sup>18</sup> *IEph* 27:19–22.

<sup>19</sup> See also, *IEph* 27:84–87; 365–368. Also compare the list of virtues ascribed to the prytanus Tiberius Claudius Antipater Julianus: a patriot (φιλόπατρις), loyal to the emperor (φιλοσέβαστος), pure, pious (εὐσεβής) (*IEph* 27:429, 435).

<sup>20</sup> *IEph* 27:441–442.

Salutaris's pious benefaction toward Ephesus' patron goddess Artemis also may have served to legitimate Salutaris as an "authentic citizen" (γνήσιος πολεῖτης) of Ephesus. While it is known that Salutaris was born a Roman citizen and a kinsman of an Italian tribe, it is not clear when he was granted his Ephesian citizenship. However, given his extensive military, political, and administrative career in the provinces of Sicily, Africa, and Belgica, it is quite possible that he was granted his citizenship only after his promises of benefaction. What better way for Salutaris to ingratiate himself to the Ephesians than by showing himself as generously pious toward the city's divine founder by refurbishing her ceremonial procession? Furthermore, one wonders if the endorsements of the proconsul Proculus and the legate Afranius Flavianus of Salutaris's foundation and Ephesus' public recognition of Salutaris did not also serve to validate Salutaris's worthy character within the context of those disparaging Salutaris as an ingenuous social climber. As James Oliver observes, it was not at all necessary and perhaps even cumbersome for the proconsul and the legate to approve the ratification of such decrees agreed upon by the council and the people of a free provincial city.<sup>21</sup> That some in Ephesus were in fact critical of Salutaris is suggested by a graffito discovered in a latrine belonging to one of the apartments near the Embolos

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<sup>21</sup> James H. Oliver, "The Roman Governor's Permission for a Decree of the Polis," *Hesperia* (1954): 163–67. Oliver suggests that Salutaris may have requested his friends within the provincial Roman administration to ratify his foundation to ensure that its stipulations would be protected not only by the jurisdiction of Ephesus, but also by that of Roman law. On the preservation and display of official letters and recommendations as tokens that distinguished men as honorable, see J. E. Lendon, *Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 48–49.

Street.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, one wonders how well known Salutaris was among the Ephesians before his foundation or even for how long he had been a citizen given Afranius Flavianus's observation that Salutaris's goodwill (εὐνοίας) toward the Ephesians had escaped the notice of the majority of its citizens.<sup>23</sup> Whatever the potential political motivations that motivated Salutaris's foundations or the inclusion of his illustrious endorsements, the rhetoric of piety within the Salutaris inscription functions to legitimate this benefactor as a genuine citizen of Ephesus—a case that is amplified by the location of these honorary inscriptions upon two of the city's most important cultural structures: the theater and the temple of Artemis.<sup>24</sup>

#### PIETY AND ELITE COMPETITION FOR HONOR

Salutaris's pious generosity participated within a competitive culture of benefaction within which the wealthy were encouraged to distinguish themselves through their generous financing of sacred festivals, building projects, athletic

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<sup>22</sup> See H. Taeuber, "C. Vibius Salutaris—Wohnungsbesitzer im Hanghaus 2?" in *Synergia: Festschrift für Friedrich Krininger*, ed. Barbara Brandt, Verena Gassner, and Sabine Ladstätter (Vienna: Phoibos, 2005), 2.349–53; Guy McClean Rogers, *The Mysteries of Artemis: Cult, Polis, and Change in the Graeco-Roman World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 172 n7.

<sup>23</sup> *IvE* 27:378–79.

<sup>24</sup> See also the unpublished dissertation of Christopher Stroup, "Jewish Acts: Christ-followers and Jewishness in Acts of the Apostles" (PhD Diss., Boston University, 2015). Stroup argues that Salutaris negotiates and legitimates both his Roman and Greek identity within his honorary inscription. By representing himself as pious toward both Artemis and the emperors and by commissioning a type-statue of the Romanized tribe of the Sebaste to be carried alongside of other type-statues representing traditional founding tribes of the Ephesians, Salutaris presents himself as both an exemplary Roman and Hellene.

competitions, wheat-doles, and distributions of money.<sup>25</sup> Roman historian Richard Saller has aptly summarized this cultural framework:

The most basic premise from which the Romans started was that honor and prestige derived from the power to give what others needed or wanted. Competition for honor and the resulting social subordination were natural parts of life.<sup>26</sup>

Such competition is observable in the city of Oinoanda in Lycia (Southwestern Asia Minor), where wealthy patrons seem to have adopted the strategy of ‘one-upping’ their aristocratic peers in a series of agonistic festivals, with each successive athletic and artistic contest more elaborate than the last.<sup>27</sup> In as much as benefaction was portrayed as a “necessary duty” (*necessarium officium*) of the wealthy as proper citizens of their native cities or villages,<sup>28</sup> so much so was it expected that the fulfillment of duties were properly recognized with public honors and even immortalized in marble and copper states for generations to come. Evidence of this culture of spurring on benefaction through the compensation of honorary inscriptions can be found in Proculus’s endorsement of Salutaris to the Ephesians:

I think, for the good things he has already done for you and now announces, it is necessary for you to give, in return for his generosity (φιλοτειμία) and goodwill (εὐμενεία), the things you have voted in his honor. I congratulate you for having praised this man, and for having deemed him worthy of just

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<sup>25</sup> John Nicols, “Pliny and the Patronage of Communities,” *Hermes* (108) 365–385; Danker, *Benefactor*, 393–416; Onno Van Nijf, “Inscriptions and Civic Memory in the Roman East,” in *The Afterlife of Inscriptions*, ed. Alison E. Cooley (London: University of London, 2000), 24.

<sup>26</sup> Richard P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 126; Claude Eilers, *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 84–108.

<sup>27</sup> Onno Van Nijf, “Local heroes: athletics, festivals and elite self-fashioning in the Roman East,” in *Being Greek Under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic, and the Development of Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 313.

<sup>28</sup> See Pliny, *Ep.* 4.1.3; John Nicols, “Pliny and the Patronage,” 375.

commendation from us, with a view toward there being more who, according to capabilities, are enthusiastic for similar things.<sup>29</sup>

Especially in the second century C.E., public munificence proliferated in the Roman East, and with it the memorialization of civic patrons crowded the city landscape. In some cities, the commemoration of elites became so excessive that city officials elected to honor new patrons by erasing the inscriptions from older statues and inscribing the names of the new honorees in their place.<sup>30</sup> Through honorary inscriptions the accomplishments, civic virtues, and benefaction of elites were collectively marked and memorialized, signifying these individuals as models for emulation.<sup>31</sup>

At stake behind the public promotion of piety through honorary inscriptions within the cultural domain of elite benefaction lies the procurement and preservation of honor.<sup>32</sup> This “struggle for reputation,” (ὁ περὶ τῆς δόξης ἀγών) as described by Dio Chrysostom (*Or.* 66.18), was a central facet of Roman society.

According to New Testament scholar Joseph Hellerman, the desire for honor “served

<sup>29</sup> *IvE* 27:347–53: [νομίζω καὶ ὑμᾶς,] ἐφ’ οἷς ἤδη [πεποίηκεν ὑμεῖν καὶ νῦν ἐπανγγέλλεται ἀγαθοῖς, χρῆναι τῇ τε [φιλοτειμίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἀνταποδοῦναι καὶ τῇ εὐμεν]είᾳ, ἃ πρὸς [τειμὴν αὐτοῦ ἐψηφίσατε. συνήδομαι δ’ ὑμεῖν εἰς τὸ ἐπαι]νέσαι τε τὸν [ἄνδρα καὶ ἀξιῶσαι αὐτὸν δικαίας παρ’ ἡμεῖ]ν μαρτυρίας [πρὸς τὸ καὶ πλείους γενέσθαι τοὺς κατὰ τὰ] δυνατὰ προ[θυμουμένους εἰς τὰ ὅμοια.]

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Dio Chrysostom’s *Rhodian Oration* (*Or.* 31) in which he chastises the Rhodians for erasing the honorary inscriptions that mark various ancient statues in their cities so that they might have a clean slate for honoring more recent benefactors and patrons of the city.

<sup>31</sup> See also Elizabeth Forbis, *Municipal Virtues in the Roman Empire: The Evidence of Italian Honorary Inscriptions* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1996), who argues that “the primary function of the inscriptions’ honorary language was to present the honorand as an *exemplum* of virtue, rather than to express appreciation for his or her achievements” (p. 9); Joseph Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi: Carmen Christi as Cursus Pudorum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 95; Danker, *Benefactor*, 437–38.

<sup>32</sup> On the significance of and competition over honor for both elites and non-elites within the Greco-Roman society, see Lendon, *Empire of Honour*; Carlin Barton, *Roman Honor: The Fire in the Bones* (Berkeley: University of California, 2001); Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*.

as a primary source of social energy for public service and office-seeking in Rome and in the provinces.”<sup>33</sup> This sentiment is echoed in Dio Chrysostom’s oration, *To the People of Rhodes*, in which he describes “the lust of honor” (φιλοτίμων) as a central motivating impulse behind noble and successful men:

For you will find that there is nothing else, at least in the case of the great majority, that incites every man to despise danger, to endure toils, and to scorn the life of pleasure and ease...However, this much is clear, that neither you nor any others, whether Greeks or barbarians, who are thought to have become great, advanced to glory and power for any other reason than because fortune gave to each in succession men who were jealous of honor (φιλοτίμων) and regarded their fame (εὐφημίαν) in after times as more precious than life. For the pillar, the inscription, and being set up in bronze are regarded as a high honor by noble men...For all men set great store by the outward tokens of high achievement (τὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς σύμολα), and not one man in a thousand is willing to agree that what he regards as a noble deed shall have been done for himself alone and that no other man shall have knowledge of it.<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, honor and posthumous fame (εὐφημίαν) were such weighty commodities for ancient Romans and their provincial subjects that the public memorialization of one’s achievements was worth the cost and sacrifice of many other cultural and material commodities, including material wealth, bodily health, pleasure, and even life itself. It is the lust for honor (φιλοτίμων), according to Dio, that has seduced the driving interests of elites. This concern to display one’s benefactions and offices within the *cursus honorum* (course of offices) is further evidenced by numerous honorary inscriptions from individual benefactors and voluntary associations

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<sup>33</sup> Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 34.

<sup>34</sup> *Rhod. (Or. 31)* 17, 20, 22 (Cohoon, LCL). See also Cicero’s sentiments about how man’s desire for honor and glory set them ablaze, *Tusc.* 1.2.4; 2.24.58; Barton, *Roman Honor*, 37.



within Ephesus and around the Mediterranean.<sup>35</sup> For example, around the beginning of the second century C.E., T. Claudius Aristion, one of the most elevated leading men of Ephesus, was honored by a statue in the Baths of Varius dedicated by the association of the Silversmiths. Aristion's numerous honorable offices, including high priest of Asia, president, and temple warden, were inscribed upon this base.<sup>36</sup> Thus the confirmation and promotion of one's honorable status played an important motivating role for the erection and foundation of honorary inscriptions and statue bases, like those of Salutaris.

We can further trace the operation of a rhetoric of piety within honorary inscriptions throughout the ancient Mediterranean. As I will discuss more in chapter 6, throughout the first century C.E., a class of officiates within the Artemis cult called the Kouretes listed their names and distinguished themselves as the 'pious' (εὐσεβείς) upon the columns of the πρυτανεῖον (seat of the prytaneis) of Ephesus.<sup>37</sup> In line with my analysis of the rhetoric of piety in the Salutaris inscription, Guy MacLean Rogers has argued that piety in the Kouretes inscription was part of a "public, rhetorical strategy" that "justified and legitimated the positions of authority

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<sup>35</sup> In *Reconstructing Honor*, Joseph Hellerman demonstrates this concern through his analysis of numerous inscriptions from the forum and cemetery of Philippi (pp. 88–109).

<sup>36</sup> *IEph* 425; see Richard S. Ascough, Philip A. Harland, and John S. Kloppenborg, *Associations in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2012), 104–5 for an English translation. Other examples of individuals honored by voluntary associations include statue bases inscribed in honor of the chief physician of Emperor Trajan (*IEph* 719; *Associations*, 105); of P. Vedius Antoninus by various Ephesian civic institutions (*IEph* 728; *Associations*, 106); and of P. Vedius Antoninus by the Wool Workers (*IEph* 727; *Associations*, 107).

<sup>37</sup> See Rogers, *Mysteries of Artemis*, 134–35. Other honorary inscriptions in Ephesus that describe the piety of the honorand include those dedicated on behalf of the prytanis Dionysodoros (*IEph* 1024) and the legate Gaius Antius Aulus Julius Quadratus (*IEph* 1538). See also the inscription in honor of Artemis from the temple officials (νεωποιοί) who performed their duty both piously (εὐσέβως) and eagerly (φιλοτείμως) (*IEph* 1590a).

and power that they held within the civic hierarchy of Ephesos.”<sup>38</sup> In a first or second century C.E. inscription from Smyrna, the city council, people, and the synod of the mysteries of the goddess (ἡ σύνοδος τῶν τῆς θεοῦ μυστῶν) honor two sister priestesses (θεολόγοι) for their piety (εὐσέβειαν) toward the gods and furnishing the festivities of the mysteries.<sup>39</sup> In Mysia, a city located in the Northwest of Asia Minor, during the second quarter of the first century C.E., a posthumous honorary decree was inscribed upon the tomb of Apollonia, a priestess of Artemis, celebrating her moderation (σωφροσύνην) and her piety toward her priestly duties (τῆς περὶ τὰ ἱερὰ αὐτῆς εὐσεβήσας).<sup>40</sup> In Lagina, a city outside of Stratonikeia, those who had dutifully completed their terms of services as priests were described as having done so “piously” (εὐσεβῶς) and “generously” (φιλοτείμως).<sup>41</sup> In Aphrodisias, Attalos Hierakos Adrastos, in celebrating his endowment of 122,000 denarii to the patron goddess Aphrodite, promotes his piety (εὐσέβεια) toward the goddess and his generosity (φιλοτείμως) and goodwill (εὐνοία) toward his hometown (πρὸς τὴν πατρίδα).<sup>42</sup> These inscriptions and thousands more<sup>43</sup> attest to the prevalence and

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<sup>38</sup> Rogers, *Mysteries of Artemis*, 135. Rogers continues, “They had the ‘right stuff’ to be Artemis’s defenders for the year: that is, family connections, money, and civic status.”

<sup>39</sup> *ISmyr* 653. See also *ISmyr* 216, 521, 639.

<sup>40</sup> See G. H. R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*, vol. 4 (North Ryde, N.S.W.: The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University, 1987), 10-13, which relies upon the edition of E. Schwertheim, *ZPE* (1978), 213–18 (pls. 11, 12).

<sup>41</sup> *IStr* 530; see Oliver, *Sacred Gerousia*, 148–49; for other instances, see *IStr* 526, 538, 540, 663, 678, 684, 685, 690, 691, 694, 698, 713, 735; see also *IStr* 536, 537, 665a, 669, 674, 695a, 707, 711.

<sup>42</sup> MAMA VIII, 413; see Danker, *Benefactor*, 73–74.

<sup>43</sup> A simple search for εὐσεβ- on the Packard Humanities Institute (PHI) searchable database of Greek epigraphy yields 1618 hits for Asia Minor alone (<http://epigraphy.packhum.org/inscriptions>).

cultural significance of this honorary epithet and its discursive link with other civic virtues such as generosity (φιλοτείμος) towards the citizen body.<sup>44</sup> The vast occurrence of inscriptions that paid tribute to those who had faithfully and generously fulfilled their duties reinforced for elites the kind of virtues they should aspire to and procure for themselves in order to portray themselves as honorable citizens whose posthumous fame would shine throughout time.

### **The Legitimizing Function of Piety and Benefaction within the Social Order**

These civic virtues that were ascribed to elites, also functioned to justify the large discrepancy in wealth between the elites and the lower classes and marked the wealthy out as particularly fit to lead. That the wealthy were the most virtuous and useful citizens to the state was deeply rooted within Greek political ideology and also grounded within Rome's foundation myth with Romulus's differentiating the patrician order from the plebeians to assist him in governing the state.<sup>45</sup> According to Roman historian Arjan Zuiderhoek, "Whereas it was good to be philanthropic, patriotic, publically generous and so forth, only the rich had the means to be all this, hence only the rich could show themselves to be good citizens. Not all rich men were good, but all good men were — usually — rich."<sup>46</sup> The self-representation of the rich as generous (φιλότειμος) and pious (εὐσεβής) patrons whose benefactions

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<sup>44</sup> When εὐσεβ- and φιλοτει- searched for together on the PHI Greek inscription database, a total of 188 hits occur in Asia Minor.

<sup>45</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 2.9.3. See Nicols, "Pliny and Patronage," 375; Arjan Zuiderhoek, *The Politics of Munificence in the Roman Empire: Citizens, Elites and Benefactors in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 121–33.

<sup>46</sup> Zuiderhoek, *Politics of Munificence*, 121.

provided for enhancement of the city's well-being<sup>47</sup> served to naturalize their elevated status and power within a progressively oligarchic political system within the provinces of the Roman East.<sup>48</sup> In his analysis of the aggregate effect of the many athletic competitions and sacred festivals organized by benefactors in Lycia (Southwestern coast of Asia Minor), Onno van Nijf concludes that benefactors and their families were established as “not only the guardians of Greek culture, but also as a separate, superior stratum in society.”<sup>49</sup>

Such strategies of grounding and maintaining the legitimacy of hierarchical social ordering within civic foundation stories and sacred religious festivals are almost to be expected according to Bourdieu's framework of analysis and his conception of “symbolic violence.” Through the vehicles of story-telling and the financing of festive performances that reify and naturalize the social order, “the dominant culture contributes to the real integration of the dominant class” and “contributes to the fictitious integration of society as a whole, and thus to the apathy (false consciousness) of the dominated classes.”<sup>50</sup> These cultural assumptions about the virtues especially attainable by the wealthy that equipped them to lead were

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<sup>47</sup> According to Zuiderhoek, the benefaction of elites in the province of Asia Minor during the second century C.E. “was not essential to the economic survival of the cities,” but rather was “the icing on the richly decorated cake of civic life” (*Politics of Munificence*, 51; see pp. 37–52 for his larger argument).

<sup>48</sup> Van Nijf, “Local heroes,” 333. On presumption that wealthy officials are indeed above the rest in terms of their superiority and what they bring to the city, see Dio Chrysostom, *Orations* 48.9–10. See also Van Nijf, “Inscriptions and Civic Memory,” 21–36, esp. 24; Richard Gordon, “The Veil of Power,” 199–231; esp. 229: “Part of the function of philanthropic gestures is to register and naturalize the inequalities of the social system in each community, just as the emperors' patronage and generosity marshals and orchestrates the overall hierarchy of the system as a whole.” Plutarch suggests that benefaction functioned to ameliorate the envy of less wealthy citizens (*Praec. ger. rei publ.* 822A).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

<sup>50</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 166.

habituated into the consciousness of the dominated through their education and entertainment. As a result, such ideological assumptions pervaded a number of cultural domains within the ancient Mediterranean, including as we shall see, the *ekklēsia*. Thus we must also understand the recognition of Salutaris's generous piety as both framed by and reifying a broader cultural ideology that represented the wealthy as the best citizens and most suitable to govern on account of their virtues exceptionally displayed in their benefaction to the city.

## CONCLUSION

The honorary inscription of Salutaris illuminates a cultural practice of benefaction that was characterized by elite competition and appealed to piety in order to display benefactors as honorable citizens. This signification of elites as honorable citizens was further strengthened through the association of piety with such virtues as good-will (εὐνοία) and generosity (φιλοτεία). This link between benefaction and virtue was undergirded by a deeply-rooted ideology and what Bourdieu has identified as a 'strategy of symbolic violence' that associated virtuous qualities as the exceptional possession of the wealthy, who as a result, were the natural and fitting leaders of the city. Piety, alongside of a number of other civic virtues associated with benefaction, functioned to reify the naturalization of hierarchy within Greco-Roman cities. Furthermore, for Salutaris, the ascription of piety functions alongside of other strategies to legitimate himself as a genuine citizen of Ephesus.

In the next chapter we will explore how these insights make intelligible the author of 1 Timothy's appeal to piety amid rival teachers and wealthy patrons. I argue that it is precisely the ideological assumptions and structures of social power inherent within the cultural practices of benefaction and patronage discussed in this chapter that the author attempts to denigrate rival teachers and retain patrons of the *ekklēsia*. Mapping out how the author defines and redistributes the contents and prestige of piety within the domain of the *ekklēsia* will be the central concern of the next chapter.

## Chapter Four

### *Piety and Patronage: 1 Timothy 6 and the Negotiation of the Authority of Benefactors*

In 1 Timothy 6, the themes of piety, wealth, benefaction, and patronage converge in the author's closing admonishments against rival teachers and about the responsibilities of the rich. According to the author, there is great gain (πορισμὸς μέγας) in piety (εὐσέβεια) (1 Tim. 6:6), that orients the *ekklēsia* away from "senseless and harmful desires" to acquire wealth and material possessions which "plunge people into ruin and destruction" (1 Tim. 6:9). Those whose teachings contrast against the "sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 6:3) misconstrue this piety in their attempt to turn a profit (1 Tim. 6:5). Rather the rich are encouraged to reconsider their relation to their wealth and to be liberal in generosity (1 Tim. 6:19), placing their trust not in their riches, but in God (1 Tim. 6:17). Through a rhetorical analysis of these admonitions in conjunction with 1 Timothy's proscriptions against (wealthy) women from teaching, I suggest that a historical-rhetorical situation begins to emerge that pits the vision of an ideal *ekklēsia* endorsed by the author against that proffered by other teachers and the wealthy patrons who support these rival teachers.

In this chapter I examine how the rhetoric of piety employed in civic benefaction and patronage helps us to appreciate the social dynamics and political stakes of the author's claim to piety. I suggest that reading 1 Timothy in light of the competitive struggles, interests, and ideological assumptions that comprised the

practice of civic benefaction illuminates the author's negotiation of an historical-rhetorical situation comprised of relatively wealthy benefactors,<sup>1</sup> whom the author perceives to be exercising an inappropriate and unregulated amount of influence over the leadership of the *ekklēsia*. Of interest to this study is how the author's rhetoric of piety negotiates the ideological assumptions inherent within the practice of benefaction about the "natural" fitness of the wealthy to lead, while he attempts to navigate a tenuous relationship with the community's benefactors.

#### **TOWARD A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HISTORICAL-RHETORICAL SITUATION OF 1 TIMOTHY 6**

Let us first take a closer look at how the author's rhetoric of piety operates in 1 Timothy 6, where he denigrates his inscribed opponents and admonishes the wealthy. Having just provided instructions on the proper qualifications, privileges, and duties of widows (1 Tim. 5:3–16), elders (1 Tim. 5:22), and slaves (1 Tim. 6:1–2), the author harangues those who would teach anything divergent from what he has laid out in this letter:

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<sup>1</sup> When I speak about "wealthy" benefactors, I do not intend to imply that such members of the *ekklēsia* numbered among the elite and aristocratic groups within Greek and Roman urban centers, including local royalty, equestrians, or decurial families. Rather, I use "wealthy" and "high-status" to signal a level of wealth and status relatively higher than the majority of members within the *ekklēsia* whose earned either just above, at, or below the subsistence level. As Zamfir notes, we should be cautious in assuming that any of these "wealthy benefactors" came from the elite or aristocratic classes (*Men and Women in the Household of God*, 38–45, esp. 45). Rather, it is enough to posit that such Christian patrons could have belonged to a "middling group" whose moderate surplus of wealth stationed them in between the rich/*honestiores* and poor/*humiliores*. This "middling group," according to Bruce W. Longenecker, could have made up 17% of the population and consisted of merchants, traders, and veterans; see "Exposing the Economic Middle: A Revised Scale for the Study of Early Urban Christianity," *JSNT* 31 (2009): 243–78. Longenecker's own study builds upon the Steven J. Friesen's foundational study that presents a heuristic model for thinking about varying scales of economic stations beyond the binary of rich and poor, see "Poverty in Pauline Studies: Beyond the So-Called New Consensus," *JSNT* 26 (2004): 323–61. For my definition and use of ideology, see Introduction n. 77.



εἴ τις ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖ καὶ μὴ προσέρχεται ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγοις τοῖς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῇ κατ' εὐσέβειαν διδασκαλίᾳ, τετύφωται, μηδὲν ἐπιστάμενος, ἀλλὰ νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις καὶ λογομαχίας, ἐξ ᾧ γίνεται φθόνος ἕρις βλασφημίας, ὑπόνοιαι πονηραί, διαπαρατριβαὶ διεφθαρμένων ἀνθρώπων τὸν νοῦν καὶ ἀπεστερημένων τῆς ἀληθείας, νομιζόντων πορισμὸν εἶναι τὴν εὐσέβειαν. Ἔστιν δὲ πορισμὸς μέγας ἡ εὐσέβεια μετὰ αὐταρκείας· οὐδὲν γὰρ εἰσηνέγκαμεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ὅτι οὐδὲ ἐξενεγκεῖν τι δυνάμεθα· ἔχοντες δὲ διατροφὰς καὶ σκεπάσματα, τούτοις ἀρκεσθΗΣόμεθα. οἱ δὲ τούτοις ἀρκεσθΗΣόμεθα. οἱ δὲ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν ἐμπίπτουσιν εἰς πειρασμὸν καὶ παγίδα καὶ ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ἀνοήτους καὶ βλαβεράς, αἵτινες βυθίζουσιν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἰς ὄλεθρον καὶ ἀπώλειαν. ῥίζα γὰρ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστὶν ἡ φιλαργυρία, ἧς τινες ὀρεγόμενοι ἀπεπλανήθησαν ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως καὶ ἑαυτοὺς περιέπειραν ὀδύναις πολλαῖς.

If someone teaches otherwise and does not adhere to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with piety (εὐσέβειαν), that person is puffed up with conceit, understands nothing, and has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words. From these come envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, and wrangling among those who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that piety (εὐσέβειαν) is a means of gain (πορισμὸν). Of course, there is great gain in piety (εὐσέβεια) when it is accompanied with self-sufficiency (αὐταρκείας); for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich (οἱ δὲ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν) fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires (ἐπιθυμίας) that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (ῥίζα γὰρ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστὶν ἡ φιλαργυρία), and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. (1 Tim 6:3–10)

According to the author, the inscribed opponents are arrogant teachers who obsess over inane speculations (cp. 1 Tim 1:4; 4:7) that are not in accordance with true piety (1 Tim. 6:3). Their conceit blinds them from recognizing that they lack understanding and their controversial teachings produce social discord and dissention within the *ekklēsia* (1 Tim. 6:4–5). As I will discuss more in chapter 6, the author characterizes his opponents according to a widespread philosophical trope

of the sophist which portrayed opponents as being greedy, hypocritical, promoting discord, and full of all manner of vice in order to denigrate their authority and appeal to audiences.<sup>2</sup> According to 1 Timothy, the inscribed opponents' preoccupation with interpreting genealogies, myths, and the meaning of words (1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 6:3–5), as well as their ascetic lifestyle, which comprised abstention from certain foods and sex (1 Tim. 4:3), is merely a charade of piety intended to turn a profit (cp. 2 Tim. 3:5).

The author shrewdly concedes that his inscribed rivals are correct in perceiving piety as valuable capital: “Of course, there is great gain in piety (εὐσέβεια) when accompanied with self-sufficiency (αὐταρκείας)” (1 Tim 6:6). However the opponents have misconstrued what this capital purchases. Piety, according to author's vision, produces a life that seeks after God, not wealth and material possessions. The *ekklesiā* should live with contentment (αὐταρκείας), understanding that fleeting earthly possessions have no value in the eternal spiritual realm.<sup>3</sup> The author goes on to chastise his rivals' supposed eagerness to

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<sup>2</sup> This insight was made as early as Dibelius and Conzelmann (*Pastoral Epistles*, 83) and Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.86–88, 634, yet neither fully demonstrated nor utilized this insight as extensively as Karris did in his form-critical evaluation of the Pastoral Epistles, “The Function and *Sitz im Leben* of the Paraenetic Elements in the Pastoral Epistles” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1971); “The Background and Significance of the Polemic of the Pastoral Epistles,” *JBL* 92 (1973): 549–64. See my discussion of this trope in Ch. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Malherbe correctly admonishes readers to resist the temptation to interpret the author as “turning the tables” upon the Stoics in lifting up *Christ*-sufficiency over self-sufficiency which some have found grounding for in Phil. 4:11; see “Godliness, Self-Sufficiency, Greed, and the Enjoyment of Wealth: 1 Timothy 6:3–19, Part I,” *NovT* 52 (2010): 376–405, esp. 392–97; cf. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 645; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 399. Rather, what we find in 1 Timothy 6:6 is an author participating within the popular philosophical or moralist tradition, yet approaching it from another angle. On the Stoic, Cynic, and Epicurean promotion of the virtue of self-sufficiency, see Malherbe, “Godliness, Self-Sufficiency, Part I,” 392–97; Fiore (*Pastoral Epistles*, 119) references *Ep. of Diogenes* 28.8; Epictetus, *Gnom.*; Stobaeus, *fr.* 33; *Ecl.* 3; Dio Chrysostom, *Charid.* 33. Fiore also notes that contentment is contrasted to greed in *Ep. of Diogenes* 46; *Ep. of Socrates* 8.

become rich,<sup>4</sup> explaining that such greed enslaves people to their desires and eventually destroys them (1 Tim. 6:9). In the end, the rival opponents serve as a foil for the author's admonition to the *ekklēsia* to pursue virtue, piety, and obedience to God, rather than wealth.

The author next exhorts Timothy to pursue the virtues of justice (δικαιοσύνην), piety (εὐσέβειαν), and faith (πίστιν) (1 Tim 6:11). He charges Timothy to remain faithful to his calling and confession until the appearance (ἐπιφανείας) of Christ, who also stood his ground in confessing his faith before Pilate (1 Tim. 6:12–15). In a seemingly abrupt shift,<sup>5</sup> the author then returns to the theme of wealth and expounds upon the duties of the rich:

As for those who are rich in the present age, command them not to be haughty or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good (ἀγαθοεργεῖν), to be rich in good works (πλουτεῖν ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς), generous (εὐμεταδότους), and ready to share (κοινωνικούς), thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life. (1 Tim. 6:17–19)

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Kidd, *Wealth and Beneficence*, 95–96. Kidd argues that we should translate οἱ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν as “those who are determined to maintain their wealth” rather than “become rich.” In Kidd’s reading, the author here is chastising the wealthy not the false teachers. However Kidd’s reading is not persuasive and allows his interpretation of 1 Timothy as polemically engaged with wealthy benefactors to over-determine his reading of this passage. Reading this phrase as “wanting to become to be pious” is consistent not only with 1 Timothy’s stigmatizing his opponents as greedy, but also his employment of the philosophical trope of the sophist who seeks to make a profit from his sham wisdom. See also Ch. 6.

<sup>5</sup> The perceived abruptness of this shift is ameliorated to some degree, according to Abraham Malherbe, if we assume that behind such concerns about piety (εὐσέβεια), justice (δικαιοσύνη), and gain (πορισμὸς) stands a tradition of popular, moral philosophical paraenesis that linked these together as evidenced in Pseudo-Isocrates, *Dem.* 38 and Theognis 145–48. See Malherbe, “Godliness, Self-Sufficiency,” 403–5. Malherbe’s suggestion that this passages fits well within philosophical discussions of attitudes toward wealth serves his overall argument that there indeed exists a thematic connection between 1 Tim 6:3–10, 11–16, and 17–19.

As Fiore rightly observes, this passage shows how “[t]he rich, too, can live true piety by acting in accord with their faith.”<sup>6</sup> It is intriguing to read 1 Timothy’s pronounced emphasis upon “those who are rich in the present age” (οἷς πλουσίοις ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι) as a distinct group to be commanded (1 Tim 6:17) and recall the special attention 1 Timothy gives to wealthy women regarding their roles within the household of God.<sup>7</sup> As we have already discussed in chapter 2, 1 Timothy 2:9–15 instructs wealthy women to ornament themselves with good works (δι’ ἔργων ἀγαθῶν) rather than lavish accessories and is concerned about their holding teaching positions over men. What might these passages indicate about the historical-rhetorical situation of 1 Timothy?

Scholars including L. William Countryman, Reggie M. Kidd, and Elsa Tamez have insightfully argued that 1 Timothy is polemically concerned with the authority and influence wielded by the wealthy in the *ekklēsia*.<sup>8</sup> According to Kidd, more than any particular system of thought deemed heretical, 1 Timothy is concerned with the “emergence of some people who have been invested with an authority that, at least

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<sup>6</sup> Fiore, *Pastoral Epistles*, 124.

<sup>7</sup> Among the canonical epistles ascribed to Paul, only in 1 Timothy 6:17 are “those who in the present age are rich” (οἷς πλουσίοις ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι) are singled out as distinct group to be commanded.

<sup>8</sup> L. William Countryman, *The Rich Christian in the Church of the Early Empire: Contradictions and Accommodations* (New York: Mellen, 1980), 153–54, 210; Reggie M. Kidd, *Wealth and Beneficence*, 93–100, 157–58; Elsa Tamez, *Struggles for Power in Early Christianity: A Study of the First Letter to Timothy*, trans. Gloria Kinsler (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007).

in the estimation of our author, their spiritual maturity and theological discernment do not warrant.”<sup>9</sup> Kidd continues,

There are people who by virtue of wealth and stature would naturally come into ascendancy of an association. Because they and others would see in their material prosperity the proof of their piety (6:9) and thus of their authority to teach (or perhaps to choose their own teachers).<sup>10</sup>

And so the author perceives that the order and stability of the *ekklēsia* is threatened by the unwelcome influence of wealthy patrons who presumed that their benefaction and wealth marked them as fit to lead—an ideological assumption at home within the cultural domain of benefaction.

Elsa Tamez has argued that the author of 1 Timothy targets, in particular, high-status and possibly educated women who may have opened their homes for meetings.<sup>11</sup> According to Tamez, wealthy women are either financing teachers

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<sup>9</sup> Kidd, *Wealth and Beneficence*, 98. Kidd adds that the author’s attention to the restoration of order within the church than the refutation of heresy might explain, in part, the fact that the author directly address the content of teachings he refutes.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 98. According to Kidd, 1 Timothy’s is also concerned that some wealthy members have been elevated into leaders prematurely. This is indicated by the author’s warning against the hasty ordination of members (1 Tim. 5:22) and the elevation of neophytes to elders, lest such members become “puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:6).

<sup>11</sup> Tamez, *Struggles for Power*, 1–25. On the status and authority of the women targeted by the Pastoral Epistles, see also Joanna Dewey, “1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus,” in *Women’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol Newson and Sharon H. Ringe, and Jacqueline E. Lapsley, 20th anniv. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 595–604. For an overview of the roles of women patronesses within both the *ekklēsia* as well as within civic society, see Carolyn Osiek and Margaret Y. MacDonald, eds., *A Women’s Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 194–219. Cf. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, 10th anniv. ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 288–291. Schüssler Fiorenza argues that wealthy women were targeted by the Pastorals’ polemics and were subsequently subordinated according to the patriarchal prejudices of Greco-Roman society. However, she understands these women as still able to serve as presbyters (πρεσβύτεραι) (perhaps, as Prisca may have served within the author’s mind, 2 Tim 4:19) and as an overseer/bishop (ἐπισκοπή)—both more administrative positions than a theological office of universal teaching authority. I am more cynical than Schüssler Fiorenza and do not read 1 Timothy as permitting women to serve as either elders or as an overseer.

whose instruction does not agree with the theological positions supported by author or are spreading such teachings themselves.<sup>12</sup> Of course, these female teachers whom the author rebukes need not have been wealthy. As discussed above, 1 Timothy 6 describes rival teachers as greedy for wealth and under the impression that their display of piety might generate a modest income, presumably from benefactors, including wealthy patronesses. Corresponding with this portrayal of rival teachers as seeking after patrons, 2 Timothy 3:6–7 describes women as the gullible targets of sophist-like teachers, who worm their way into households and provide extensive instruction incapable of bringing such women to “the knowledge of the truth.”<sup>13</sup> Some scholars have plausibly suggested that the historical-rhetorical situation of the Pastorals is comprised of high-status women, who were attracted to an alternative instruction consisting of an over-realized eschatology (e.g., 2 Tim 2:18) that promoted an emancipatory freedom for women permitting them greater

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<sup>12</sup> However, as Zamfir correctly argues (*Men and Women in the Household of God*, 179–95), it not *necessary* to posit the presence of false teaching to explain why the author of 1 Timothy attempts to control the movement and behavior of women. As Zamfir explains, the author’s impulse to confine women’s behavior to socially acceptable conventions that included their self-effacement and subordination to men is *sufficient* to explain his prohibitions of both women, including benefactors and widows, acting independently of the roles within the household they were meant to serve dutifully (*Men and Women in the Household of God*, 179–95). While Zamfir provides a *sufficient* account for the author’s position toward women, I suspect that it is by no means a *comprehensive* explanation. Zamfir’s position, however, makes a critical intervention among evangelical interpretations that argue that 1 Timothy’s proscriptions against women teachers do not restrict women from becoming ordained ministers since the author is only concerned with women who spread *false* teaching. Thus, if modern Christians are to theologically justify the ordination of women (as they should!), they should come to terms with the fact that their position stands in tension with that of the Pastoral Epistles. Cf. Alan G. Padgett, “The Scholarship on Patriarchy (On 1 Timothy 2:8–15): A Response to *Women in the Church*, eds. Köstenberger, Schreiner, & Baldwin,” *Priscilla Papers* 11 (1997): 24–29.

<sup>13</sup> Some scholars have even posited that the “widows” whom 1 Timothy 5 admonishes for “going from house to house” and “gossiping,” are in fact spreading these rival teachers’ instructions, “which they should not say” (1 Tim 5:13). For example, see Alan Padgett, “Wealthy Women at Ephesus: 1 Timothy 2:8–15 in Social Context,” *Int.* 41 (1987): 19–31; Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 212–14.

authority within the *ekklēsia*.<sup>14</sup> And so, the author perceives his effort to establish an *ekklēsia* in harmony with his interpretation of Paul to be threatened by benefactors who have carried over into the *ekklēsia* their habituated expectations about the authoritative influence that patronage furnishes within the domain of civic benefaction.<sup>15</sup>

Such expectations align with inscriptions from Western Asia Minor, which attest to the participation of wealthy patronesses within religious offices and the public honor their benefaction and service garnered.<sup>16</sup> As Zamfir notes,

In Asia Minor from the Hellenistic period onward and even more so during the Early empire, women are increasingly present on the public stage as benefactors and holders of certain magistracies, in virtue of their (and their families) status and wealth. On the other hand, there is, no doubt, there is a striking contradiction in the image of outstanding women holding several

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<sup>14</sup> See Jouette M. Bassler, "Adam, Eve, and the Pastor. The Use of Genesis 2–3 in the Pastoral Epistles," in *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden*, ed. Gregory A. Robbins (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1988), 43–65, esp. 46–7; Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 519–23; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 197–200, 525–9.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Malherbe, "Godliness, Self-Sufficiency, Greed, and the Enjoyment of Wealth: 1 Timothy 6:3–19, Part II," *NovT* 53 (2011): 73–96, esp. 74: "We cannot with great confidence deduce from the letter that rich people were a dominating presence in the community or that the opponents were from this class, expecting that their economic and social status conferred on them the right to shape the community of faith." I think Malherbe would concede to my modest proposal that a number of "wealthy" persons (not necessarily from an aristocratic, but rather a "middling" group) were perceived to pose a possible threat to his social vision, whether actively spreading or endorsing rival teachings. I do not suggest that this group was a *dominating presence*—a proposal Malherbe attributes to Kidd (*Wealth and Beneficence*, 91, 96–100).

<sup>16</sup> On the usefulness of these materials for interpreting 1 Timothy's admonitions about wealthy women, see esp. Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 218–221; Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 301–37, esp. 303–13. On women leaders and office-holders in Asia Minor, see Steven J. Friesen, "High Priestesses of Asia and Emancipatory Interpretation," in *Walk in the Ways of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza*, ed. Shelly Matthews, Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, and Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003), 136–50; Katherine Bain, *Women's Socioeconomic Status and Religious Leadership in Asia Minor in the First Two Centuries C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014).

prestigious magistracies, depicted as modest, dedicated wives and mothers, respectful of traditional values.<sup>17</sup>

For example, a wealthy benefactress, Apollonis, was honored with a statue in Mysia, with an inscription that celebrated her “moderation” (σωφροσύνη), her office within “the priesthood of Artemis,” and “her piety toward priestly duties” (τῆς περὶ τὰ ἱερὰ αὐτῆς εὐσεβείας).<sup>18</sup> Witherington observes,

Religious roles were roles that honorable high-status women were expected to play in Ephesus, and they were expected to exhibit decorum, modesty, godliness and piety in doing so, some of the very virtues stressed repeatedly in the Pastorals for Christians, including 1 Tim 2:8–15.<sup>19</sup>

And yet, for the author, such wealthy women must be reminded to fulfill their duty in supporting the *ekklēsia* and exhibiting virtuous qualities that characterize an

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<sup>17</sup> Zamfir, *Men and Women in the Household of God*, 313. Zamfir argues that the prominence of high-status women within civic liturgical offices in the Greek east increased as the public domain became more “domesticated,” that is, the “the system of euergetism was conceived as an extension of family relations” (p. 310). Zamfir continues, “This in turn had to do with the attempt of elite (oligarchic) circles to justify their rule, through a paternalistic ideology of familial relations between the leading classes and the rest of the citizens. This blurring of the distinction between the private and public domain in the exercise of euergetism may have explained why women were entitled to act as benefactors, often in connection with the exertion of priesthoods or liturgical offices, while magistracies entailing political activities proper (decision-making and voting), as well as travelling, remained closed for women” (p. 310).

<sup>18</sup> See *NewDocs* 4:10–13 (*SEG* 28.953). Witherington also directs our attention to *IEph.* 4.1017 (*NewDocs* 6:25–27), *IEph.* 3.650; *SEG* 24.1081 (*Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 218–221). It is interesting to note the confluence of virtues, including piety and modesty, associated with the ideal matron among Roman legislation and propaganda around the imperial household, as discussed in chapters 1 and 2, and the virtues celebrated of wealthy benefactresses and high-status women in Asia Minor. It is not important for this discussion to decide whether the author of 1 Timothy’s vision of the ideal woman responds to *either* Roman imperial ideals or Greek ideals as communicated in honorary inscriptions, since the two domains are not exclusive. Rather these domains mutually informed one another in ways that are beyond the scope of this project to detail, even though both Roman and Greek cultures had their own repositories of traditional eulogistic terminology; see Forbis, *Municipal Virtues*, 2–3.

<sup>19</sup> Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 220. Cf. Sharon Hodgkin Gritz *Paul, Women Teachers, and the Mother Goddess at Ephesus: A Study of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 in Light of the Religious and Cultural Milieu of the First Century* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), who argues that women’s role in Artemis cult explains women’s expectations to teach. However, Witherington problematizes Gritz’s position, noting that we lack evidence for women officers in the Artemis cult serving in such a role (*Socio-Rhetorical Commentary Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 221).



estimable patroness, while restricting their participation and influence within the *ekklēsia*.

The author's concern about the authority and influence presumed by wealthy benefactors appears to be a common point of tension shared among second-century C.E. philosophers and other early Christians. Kendra Eshleman has demonstrated that the concerns that early Christian literature expresses about the authority and role of patrons within the church are analogous to those expressed by second-century C.E. philosophers and orators. While many of the notable philosophers, whom Philostratus recounts in his *Lives of the Sophists*, were independently wealthy and did not need to rely upon a generous patron for financial support, an ideal patron could nevertheless prove useful in opening his home for lectures, legitimating the reputation of an aspiring orator or philosopher among a network of elite friends and clients, and disseminating an author's declamations across this network.<sup>20</sup> However, wealthy patrons could also pose a problem for an orator or philosopher, as Eshleman has surveyed,

Second sophistic literature is shot through with anxieties about the ability of patrons, broadly understood, to distort the intellectual practices they sponsor, whether by endorsing the unworthy or withholding well-deserved honors and resources, by causing a *pepaideumenos* to compromise his teaching or ethical standards, or simply by infringing his cultural eminence and autonomy.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Kendra Eshleman, *The Social World of Intellectuals in the Roman Empire: Sophists, Philosophers, and Christians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 77–88; Stanley K. Stowers, "Social Status, Public Speaking and Private Teaching: The Circumstances of Paul's Preaching Activity," *NovT* 26: 59–82.

<sup>21</sup> Eshleman, *Social World of Intellectuals*, 113. For examples, see pp. 77–88, 113–21.

For example, in *Salaried Posts in Great Houses*, Lucian mocks the unqualified judgment of patrons who consider any dubious magician wearing a grey beard and cloak to be a philosopher.<sup>22</sup> Among early Christian texts, Eshleman references the exasperation of the heresiologist Hippolytus and the author of 3 John for problematic patrons in their communities who either finance heretical teachers (*Ref.* 9.8.1–2) or reject the authority of presumably authoritative religious experts (3 John 9–10).<sup>23</sup> Both Christians and philosophers strived to persuade their audiences that the sophistication required to distinguish between genuine and imitation *paideia* were their exceptional prerogatives, not that of their patrons'. And so, 1 Timothy mirrors the tactics of differentiation deployed by second sophistic philosophers and other early Christians to the extent that it seeks to monopolize the authoritative ability to distinguish between sound teachings and fanciful speculations.

Indeed, the threatening prospect that wealthy benefactors might financially support and spread the teachings of rival religious entrepreneurs animates the paraenesis of 1 Timothy 6. It even seems that this very concern threads together the seemingly disparate units of 1 Timothy 6 which include: a denigration of the opponents and their disingenuous pursuit of piety (1 Tim 6:2b–10), an exhortation to Timothy to stand firm in his virtue and piety as Jesus did before Pilate (1 Tim 6:11–16), and an admonition to benefactors to give generously (but to the right people) (1 Tim 6:17–19). A final warning to Timothy to guard the truth against

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<sup>22</sup> Lucian, *Merc. cond.* 40.

<sup>23</sup> Eshleman, *Social World of Intellectuals*, 114–15.

those who hold onto a false “knowledge” about the nature of the divine and piety (1 Tim 6:20–21) forms an *inclusio* with 1 Tim 6:2b–10. What Conzelmann and Dibelius identified as an assemblage of general paraenesis may instead be a strategic negotiation of power relations among the author, patrons, and opponents which seeks to dissuade patrons from financially supporting and spreading rival teachings. So then what role does the author’s rhetoric of piety play within the scope of his attempt to dissuade benefactors from supporting those who “teach another doctrine” (ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω, 1 Tim 1:3; 6:3) and to circumscribe the influential status and participation of wealthy patrons and patronesses within the ideal *ekklēsia*?

#### THE RHETORIC OF PIETY AND THE NEGOTIATION OF BENEFACTORS’ AUTHORITY

As we have seen throughout 1 Timothy, the author repeatedly contrasts the richness of his piety that constitutes his possession of the teaching of Jesus Christ, the ultimate signifier of piety, against the bankrupt claims of his rivals (e.g., 1 Tim 4:1–8; 6:3–11). At stake in the author’s claim to piety and the denunciation of the impiety of his inscribed opponents is the patronage of benefactors whose habituated aspirations for status and perhaps even their sense of duty spurred their interest in supporting the work of such religious entrepreneurs.<sup>24</sup> This reconstruction of the historical-rhetorical conflict over the status of piety among teachers unfolds before and even within a broader context wherein wealthy elites

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<sup>24</sup> Of course, such socio-political motivations of benefaction overlap with both devotional and personal interests that wealthy elites took in financially supporting religious cults, such as the Christian *ekklēsia*.

sought to elevate, distinguish, or even justify their status through benefactions that marked themselves as ‘pious.’ It is the intersection of the author’s struggle against the rival teachers, concerns about the influential authority of the wealthy, and the ideological assumptions, which undergirded practices of civic benefaction, that fueled the fire for his emphasis upon his possession of, even monopoly over piety, and the counterfeit claims of his rivals. I suggest that the cultural legitimacy that attended claims to piety within honorary inscriptions helps us to appreciate how the strategic intervention the author’s rhetoric of piety serves to attract and maintain the support of patrons within the *ekklēsia* while also circumscribing the authority that the wealthy wield on the politics and teachings of the ideal *ekklēsia*.

By announcing his possession of the “sound words of the Lord Jesus Christ”<sup>25</sup> and the “teaching according to piety,” the author of 1 Timothy seeks to monopolize authority over matters of faith and the ecclesiastical organization of the *ekklēsia* against all those who “teach otherwise” (ἐτεροδιδασκαλέω) (1 Tim. 6:3). The author attempts to establish a hierarchy and a lineage of authority, with Jesus at the head and as the absolute referent toward which piety is due. Jesus’s “sound words” are carried forth by the apostle Paul—whose name the pseudepigrapher has appropriated—and are to be obeyed by the apostle’s delegate “Timothy” and the *ekklēsia*. Within the present of the pseudepigraphal author, those who rightfully hold ecclesiastical and doctrinal authority not only should conform to the

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<sup>25</sup> As Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, states, it is unlikely that the ambivalent genitive phrase “of our Lord Jesus Christ” signals the actual sayings of Jesus (cf. Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.557) or that the teachings are *about* Jesus (p. 394; cf. Dibelius and Conzelmann, 83). Rather, Towner suggests that “[t]he intention of the additional genitive phrase is far more likely to ascribe the origin and, consequently the authority of the teaching to Jesus” (Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 394).

qualifications laid out for overseers/elders (1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9), and deacons (1 Tim. 3:8–13), but also are said to possess an “inheritance” (παράθήκη, 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:12, 14) of teaching and authority that has been conferred upon them by the discernment of virtuous qualities, confirmation by a prophetic word, and laying on of hands by those who also have been entrusted with this “deposit” (1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22; 2 Tim 1:6).<sup>26</sup> The exclusion of the inscribed rival teachers from this genealogy of piety not only correlates to their impotent piety (2 Tim. 3:5), but, as Geoffrey S. Smith has demonstrated, begets its own lineage of corrupt teachers—the culmination of which comprises the future generation of apostates (1 Tim. 4:1–5) who constitute rival teachers of the pseudepigraphal author’s present.<sup>27</sup> And so, the chain of succession of “guardians of the inheritance” (2 Tim. 1:14) in concert with a rhetoric of piety functions to reassure and persuade audiences about the legitimacy of the social vision and doctrinal integrity of the instructions of the Pastoral Epistles, while demarcating rival teachers as outsiders.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, this apostolic lineage also functions to clarify where institutional authority and the ability to discern true instruction on piety resides within the *ekklēsia*.

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<sup>26</sup> While παράθήκη can be translated “deposit” signaling that which is entrusted to another (BDAG 764), I follow Geoffrey S. Smith’s translation of “inheritance” to underline how the Pastorals envision the authoritative teaching as being passed down from one generation to another. See Smith, *Guilt by Association: Heresy Catalogues in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 44.

<sup>27</sup> Smith, *Guilt by Association*, 27–48, esp. 35–43.

<sup>28</sup> I borrow the phrase “guardians of the inheritance” from Smith (*Guilt by Association*, 44), which in turn, is adapted from Dennis R. MacDonald’s “guardians of the tradition” (*Legend of the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983], 68). For an overview of common strategies deployed by early Christian polemicists that functioned to demarcate boundaries between insiders and outsiders, see Karen L. King, *What is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 20–54, esp. 38–52.

The author's rhetoric of piety in 1 Timothy 6 attempts to represent his ideal *ekklēsia* as an enticing, if not the only appropriate investment opportunity for wealthy patrons seeking to manifest their piety through benefaction in order to accrue honor for themselves. However, in place of receiving honorary inscriptions recognizing their piety, the author assures benefactors that their generosity is recognized by God and that their donated wealth is accruing for them an even greater treasure in the eschatological age to come (1 Tim. 6:19). The author also seeks to persuade those who are wealthy in the present age about the genuineness of his claim to piety over competing claims. According to 1 Timothy 6, benefactors will gain the greatest return on their benefaction in the age to come if they financially support those who possess true piety. And so, the author capitalizes upon the cultural prestige that accompanied claims to piety within the cultural domain of honorary inscriptions in order to secure the financial support of patrons.

Furthermore, the author's representation of the knowledge and discernment of piety as the specialized competence of those who have been entrusted with the "inheritance" functions to challenge certain ideological assumptions that framed the cultural practice of civic benefaction and patronage. According to these assumptions, which undergirded the commemoration of piety in honorary inscriptions, the wealthy were deserving of honor because of what they could offer to the city and to the gods and were thus celebrated as those whose actions demonstrated that they possessed piety in its most excellent form. However, within the household of God, the rules for how authority and honor are accrued and distributed on the basis of piety differ from the cultural domain of civic benefaction.

The author of 1 Timothy makes it clear that, within the *ekklēsia*, the wealthy are not necessarily the possessors of piety *par excellence* nor does their pious benefaction guarantee a position of authority. Rather, piety is most assuredly manifest among those within the chain of succession (i.e., bishops, elders, deacons) in so far as they are the guardians of what truly produces piety, namely, the teachings of Jesus Christ. By locating the knowledge of piety, first and foremost within the expertise of ordained leaders, the author seeks to circumscribe the influence and authority of benefactors. Benefactors should not assume that their support of the *ekklēsia* entitles them to teach or sponsor teachers, rather all such decisions must measure up to the standard of truth and piety (1 Tim. 3:15–16) guarded by those who are ordained. While the wealthy could seek to be ordained, they first must undergo a vetting process lest they are found to be not in agreement with those who teach otherwise from the sound words of Jesus and the teaching according to piety (1 Tim. 6:3).<sup>29</sup> According to the author’s vision, those who are wealthy show their piety by obedience to the church leaders to the extent that piety is exhibited in showing proper respect to those in authority. Indeed, women patronesses who sought to teach men in the *ekklēsia* would not pass such a test, as their actions do not befit women who profess piety toward God (θεοσεβεία, 1 Tim. 2:10).

Thus, the author of 1 Timothy attempts to navigate a precarious relationship with the wealthy. The tension lies within the author’s encouragement of the wealthy

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<sup>29</sup> Trebilco (*Early Christians in Ephesus*, 226) suggests that it is possible to read 1 Timothy’s emphasis upon the qualifications and status of each office within the household of God—which include “not being a lover of money” (ἀφιλάργυρον; 1 Tim 3:3) nor “greedy for money” (μὴ αἰσχροκερδῆ; 1 Tim 3:8; Tit 1:7)—as serving to clarify for wealthy patrons the hierarchy and qualifications of authority to be followed within the community.

to give generously, while also denying these benefactors the influence over the *ekklēsia* that they would expect in exchange for their munificence given the pervasive cultural assumptions about benefaction. While influence is not automatically granted to benefactors according to the author's hierarchical arrangement within the household of God, the author understands that the *ekklēsia*, especially the poor, thrives upon their munificence. Even though he elevates the authoritative position of those "guardians of the inheritance," namely the bishops and deacons, as those who know what constitutes true piety over against whatever positions of social power were assumed by patrons, he nevertheless envisions these officials as being supported by the benefaction of patrons. That is to say, the author depends upon his patrons' perception that he and his delegates are legitimate purveyors of pious instruction from God, over against competing teachers, and that these benefactors esteem such piety as valuable enough to support financially.<sup>30</sup>

It is difficult to imagine that the author was very persuasive in convincing wealthy women to give up their position of influence and authority in teaching. However, then again, perhaps it was not so much such women the author needed to persuade as the other males, whom he wanted to pressure these women to fulfill

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<sup>30</sup> I am in agreement with Trebilco (*Early Christians in Ephesus*, 408–410) that the leadership envisioned by the author was not necessarily comprised of wealthy members. Trebilco, following the sociological analysis of Justin Meggitt, argues against Verner's interpretation that officeholders are heads of households, which likely included slaves, and were wealthy (Verner, *Household of God*, 134–35, who relies upon the work of Gerd Theissen). Meggitt (arguing against Theissen) has demonstrated that it was possible for many non-wealthy household to own and maintain slaves; see Meggitt, *Paul, Poverty and Survival*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 129–131. That the author reminds his audience to pay elders a "double honor" (διπλὴ τιμή) for their service in teaching (1 Tim 5:17), followed two proverbs "from Scripture" about the payment of laborers (1 Tim. 5:18) suggests the author's ideal leaders were not wealthy and perhaps in need of financial compensation (see Trebilco, *Early Christians in Ephesus*, 409).



what he considered to be their proper station within the household of God as ministers to other women. If they aspired to an office in which they could wield an appropriate level of influence, there was always the position of deaconess (1 Tim 3:8–13, esp. 11). While some patronesses may have resolved to relinquish their authority to teach men, others may have persisted.<sup>31</sup>

### THE RHETORIC OF PIETY AND CHRISTIAN "BÜRGERLICHKEIT"

In chapter 2, I discussed how the Pastoral Epistles' claims to piety served as an apologetic against Greco-Roman perceptions of Christians as practicing a foreign superstition and as potentially seditious to the Roman state. Against such prejudice, the author of the Pastorals represents the *ekklēsia* as loyal imperial subjects who embodied piety—the very virtue that made Rome great, while redefining the contents of this virtue around their devotion to Christ. This apologetic appeal becomes amplified to whatever extent that the Pastorals' claims to piety called to mind the claims to piety made through honorary inscriptions, along with the cultural assumptions about civic benefaction and what Dibelius's described as the *Greek ideals of "Bürgerlichkeit,"* that is, what constitutes dutiful members of civic society. In examining the inscriptions of Salutaris, I have pointed to how the public manifestation of piety was often connected to ideological assumptions about the qualities of ideal citizens and subjects and the honorable status ascribed to such figures. Beyond 1 Timothy's central project of denigrating competing

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<sup>31</sup> It is quite possible that the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* are indicative of later articulations representative of the positions held by the wealthy women behind the inscribed situation of 1 Timothy. See Fatum, "Christ Domesticated," 202–4.

interpretations of the Pauline tradition, piety is employed to portray the early Christian community as attractive, or at least tolerable to its Roman and provincial neighbors.

According to the author of 1 Timothy, Christians are neither dangerous nor foreign anarchists. Rather the author admonishes his audiences to seek what any good subject under Roman rule who is not out to disrupt the system should seek, a “quiet and peaceful life” that accords with “piety and seriousness in every way” (1 Tim 2:2b).<sup>32</sup> By turning to the Salutaris inscription as well as unpacking the ideological assumptions around civic benefaction, I have sought to show who how notions of what constitutes an ideal member of society were constructed and reinforced within the discourse on piety found in honorific inscriptions. As I posited in the previous chapter, the rhetoric of piety in the Salutaris inscription functioned to portray Salutaris as an ideal citizen of Ephesus—perhaps even despite the scorn of some who perceived that this Roman outsider had purchased his Ephesian citizenship through his benefaction. This buttresses my suggestion that the Pastorals’ appeal to piety could have been understood as a claim to be good loyal subjects to the extent to which this civic discourse on piety intersected with the Pastorals’ claims to piety. I do not mean to say that the Pastorals’ audiences would have been led to consider that they might be perceived to be actual Roman or Ephesian citizens on account of their piety.<sup>33</sup> Rather, through their embodiment of

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<sup>32</sup> 1 Tim 2:2b: ἵνα ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι.

<sup>33</sup> It is not my argument that early Christians thought that claims to piety might possibly grant them legal citizenship whether in their provincial Greek city or within Rome. Rather, I suggest that the Pastoral Epistles hope to form subjects that could pass as relatively ‘pious’ by Roman standards, or at

pious principles and practices, early Christians may have sought to be perceived as loyal enough subjects according to Greco-Roman sensibilities and tolerance.

Although early Christians were not systematically persecuted by the Roman Empire during the late first-century and early second-century C.E., their security nevertheless depended upon the good will of their neighbors and their perceived amenability to the established order of life as constituted in each provincial community.<sup>34</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In both honorary inscriptions and the Pastoral Epistles, piety appears within a discursive complex of ideas and ideological assumptions about wealth, benefaction, authority, and civic virtue within the Roman Empire. When we contextualize the Pastoral Epistles among the claims to piety that canvassed the public sphere of ancient cities, we gain a better sense of the rhetorical strategy and stakes of the author's appeal to piety in its negotiation of the influence and authority of wealthy benefactors.

Piety held an important and recognizable cultural currency within both the politics of civic benefaction and the *ekklēsia*, and so was useful for the author of 1 Timothy's strategy of denigrating any teaching that contrasted with its own and

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least articulate their faith as conforming to the virtue of piety, and thus ameliorate any potential suspicion about the legitimacy or loyalty of their assembly.

<sup>34</sup> For a general overview on the issue of Christian persecution in the second and third centuries C.E., see Paul Middleton, *Radical Martyrdom and Cosmic Conflict in Early Christianity* (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 40–70; cf. Candida Moss, *The Myth of Persecution: How Early Christians Invented a Story of Martyrdom* (New York: HarperOne, 2013), 127–62. See also the classic debate between A. N. Sherman-White and G.E.M. de Ste Croix in M. I. Finley, ed., *Studies in Ancient Society* (London: Routledge, 1974), 210–55.

making its vision of the *ekklēsia* attractive to its audiences, including benefactors. In a world where patrons sought to finance religious activities and teachers in order to manifest their piety and to establish their authority and respect, and so, acquired a level of authority and influence that coincided with their benefaction, 1 Timothy's prohibition of presumably wealthy women from teaching (1 Tim. 2:12), denigration of rival teachers, and encouragement of benefactors to support only those who possess genuine piety stands out all the more. While the author invites benefactors to give generously, they must recognize the hierarchy of authority established within the *ekklēsia*, which locates authority and influence among those "guardians of the inheritance" who are able to discern what constitutes true piety. Thus the author attempts simultaneously to correct and court patrons and patronesses, to delegitimize his rivals as dishonorable, and to naturalize a hierarchy of power within the social order of the church. Indeed, piety is a means of great gain.

## Chapter Five

### *The Mystery of Philosophical Piety: The Rhetoric of εὐσεβεία in Philosophical Discourse*

In 1 Timothy 3:14–16, piety is juxtaposed to the author’s claim to possess a distinctive understanding about the true nature of the divine. After confidently describing the *ekklēsia* as the “pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Tim 3:15), he then elaborates:

καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον.  
ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί,  
ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι,  
ὥφθη ἀγγέλοις,  
ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν,  
ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ,  
ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ.

And most certainly, great is the mystery of piety (μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον):

He was revealed in flesh,  
vindicated in spirit,  
seen by angels,  
proclaimed among nations,  
believed in the world,  
taken up in glory. (1 Tim 3:16) <sup>1</sup>

The author of 1 Timothy introduces a “Christological summary”<sup>2</sup> as a “mystery of piety” (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον)—an ambiguous description with potentially significant cultural appeal and implications.

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<sup>1</sup> My arrangement highlights the text’s alternating emphases upon earthly and spiritual realms: flesh/spirit, angels/Gentiles, and world/(heavenly) glory. For a concise summary of the different ways that commentators have arranged this text, see Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 214–18.

<sup>2</sup> According to Mounce (*Pastoral Epistles*, 215), this passage “is almost universally recognized as a fragment of a hymn,” because of its strong hymnic structure. On the structure and the method for

What then does the phrase “mystery of piety” mean? As Angela Standhartinger has so clearly detailed,<sup>3</sup> New Testament scholars have produced a wide spectrum of interpretations surrounding the meaning of this phrase. For example, Gottfried Holtz took this phrase to be a technical term for the Eucharist, where piety connotes the real presence of Christ within the meal.<sup>4</sup> Hermann von Lips interpreted “the mystery of piety” as a referencing the proclamation (*kerygma*) about Christ, where piety signifies the content.<sup>5</sup> According to William D. Mounce, the “mystery of piety,” signifies the “Christian life” (εὐσέβεια) that “flows from the Christ-event” (μυστήριον).<sup>6</sup> Mounce is representative of most modern commentators, who have interpreted the term mystery (μυστήριον) as referencing God’s plan of salvation, which was previously hidden but now has been revealed in

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identifying this passage as a performed tradition, see Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Walker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 322–25; Mark M. Yarbrough, *Paul’s Utilization of Preformed Tradition in 1 Timothy: An Evaluation of the Apostle’s Literary, Rhetorical, and Theological Traces* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), esp. 95–102. Cf. Michael Peppard, “Poetry, ‘Hymns,’ and ‘Traditional Material’ in New Testament Epistles or How to Do Things with Indentations,” *JSNT* 30 (2008): 319–342, who critiques methodologies often used to identify New Testament passages as hymns as tenuous and unrepeatable. The precise generic categorization of this passage is not necessary for my thesis—thus my designation “Christological summary.”

<sup>3</sup> Standhartinger, “*Eusebeia*,” 52–54.

<sup>4</sup> Gottfried Holtz *Die Pastoralbriefe*, ThHNT 13 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1965), 90.

<sup>5</sup> von Lips, *Glaube, Gemeinde, Amt*, 84.

<sup>6</sup> Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 83. Cp. Roloff (*Erste Brief an Timotheus*, 201–3), who emphasized that piety constitutes the comprehensive belief- and life-praxis that follows from the content of the proclamation (i.e., the “mystery”). Cf. Brice L. Martin, “1 Timothy 3:16—A New Perspective,” *EQ* 85 (2013): 105–120, who interprets “piety” in 1 Timothy 3:16 as referencing the exemplary piety of Jesus Christ (*not* that of the *ekklēsia*), which is then recounted in the following Christological summary.

Christ Jesus’s ministry, death, and resurrection.<sup>7</sup> The “mystery of piety” also parallels “the mystery of faith” in 1 Timothy 3:9, which according to Benjamin Fiore, underlines “doctrine and praxis as two fundamentals of Christian existence.”<sup>8</sup>

Within the context of the epistle as a whole, the “mystery of piety” is situated within what Mounce has described as “the heart of the Pastoral corpus, which puts the instructions of the corpus into proper perspective.”<sup>9</sup> The instructions of 1 Timothy, grounded in tradition as evidenced by the Christological summary (1 Tim 3:16), are to serve as a present and lasting testament to the proper ordering and behavior of “the household of God” (1 Tim 3:15) in the absence of the apostle himself.<sup>10</sup> Following this passage, the doctrine and praxis of the true *ekklēsia* are sharply contrasted with the opponents’ demonic-inspired teachings and ascetic abstention from marriage and foods (1 Tim 4:1–5). Thus, for most commentators,

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<sup>7</sup> The term μυστήριον (*mustērion*) appears 28 times in the New Testament, 21 times in texts ascribed to Paul, and 8 times in Paul’s undisputed epistles, Romans and 1 Corinthians. With respect to the Pauline corpus (disputed and undisputed), the mystery of God (1 Cor 2:1; 4:1; Col 2:2) or of Christ (Eph 3:3; Col 4:3) generally equates to the gospel message of Jesus’s incarnation and the salvific effects and consequences of his death and resurrection that has been kept secret since ages past (Rom 16:25; 1 Cor 2:7; Eph 3:9), but now has been made known through revelation (Eph 1:9; 3:3). See Gregory S. Magee, “Uncovering the ‘Mystery’ in 1 Timothy 3,” *TJ* 29 (2008): 247–265.

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin Fiore, *The Pastoral Epistles*, SP 12 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 85. See Roloff (*Erste Brief an Timotheus*, 201–3), who argued that piety in the genitive case in 1 Timothy 3:16 connotes the purpose—and thus a genitive of purpose—that is both effected and defined by the person of Christ, namely a life and belief commensurate with that of Christ. See also Marius Reiser (“Bürgerliches Christentum,” 35) who argues that piety (1 Tim 3:16) and faith (1 Tim 3:9) are synonyms as piety describes the outward behavior that results from the inward belief.

<sup>9</sup> Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 214.

<sup>10</sup> For Lorenze Oberlinner (*Pastoralbriefe I*, 162), the juxtaposition of “the mystery of piety” between a statement of the mission of the church (1 Tim 3:15) and a Christ-hymn (1 Tim 3:16b) signals the uncorrupted transmission of divine revelation within the church.

the “mystery of piety” functions to introduce traditional material and summarize the purpose of 1 Timothy, if not the entire Pastoral corpus.

Because modern interpreters have been satisfied to explain the meaning of “the mystery of piety” in light of how these terms are used in the New Testament, they have yet to appreciate how 1 Timothy 3:16 resonates with a rhetoric of piety operative within philosophical literature. As we shall see, not only did philosophers dating back to Socrates contend with one another over the true nature of the divine and what constituted proper piety, but they also appropriated terminology associated with Greek and Egyptian mysteries in order to legitimate their expertise in such matters. Notable among such philosophers are Philo of Alexandria and Plutarch of Chaeronea, whose writings are roughly contemporaneous with 1 Timothy in the first and early second centuries C.E. Both authors juxtapose appeals to piety, knowledge about the divine, and references to the Eleusinian and Isidian mysteries in manners that resonate with 1 Timothy 3:16 and so serve as suitable analogues for interpreting the Pastoral Epistles. For these philosophers, claims to piety with reference to the initiation rites and cryptic wisdom often associated with ancient mysteries functioned to legitimate their claims to knowledge about the divine among competing religious experts and popular conceptions of divinity.

In this chapter, I will draw out some of the rhetorical and sociological contours of the rhetoric of piety active within Greek philosophy. In particular, I will examine how Philo and Plutarch appeal both to the virtue of piety and Greek and Egyptian mysteries in order to further their respective socio-political aims. Regarding their use of mystery terminology, I am particularly interested in how



Philo and Plutarch legitimate their respective authorial voices by portraying themselves as possessing a superior expertise in understanding and interpreting the divine in comparison with the hierophants and mystagogues of the mysteries. This chapter lays the groundwork for investigating how competing ancient appeals to piety and their corresponding claims about the mysterious nature and activity of the divine might illuminate the Pastoral Epistles' rhetorical construction of piety as a mystery revealed through Christ's manifestation. When we analyze the rhetoric of piety within Greek philosophy, we will discover a more sophisticated cultural context than scholars have thus proffered within which we can locate the Pastoral Epistles' distinctive theological conceptualization and use of piety. Moreover, we might even be able to better understand how some of the Pastoral Epistles' earliest audiences may have interpreted 1 Timothy's striking claim about the "mystery of piety" as representing the *ekklēsia* as possessing an expertise concerning the divine comparable and even superior to contemporary religious experts ranging from philosophers to hierophants.

## PIETY AMONG THE PHILOSOPHERS

Both Plutarch and Philo stand within a broad philosophical legacy of wrestling with the question of what piety entails.<sup>11</sup> This philosophical discussion

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<sup>11</sup> For helpful discussions on the philosophical interpretation and critique of the gods, sacred stories, and ritual practice, see Harold W. Attridge, "The Philosophical Critique of Religion under the Roman Empire," *ANRW* 16.1: 45–78; Adam Drozdek, *Greek Philosophers as Theologians: The Divine Arche* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007); Peter Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the Gods: Philosophical Readings of Religion in the Post-Hellenic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

can be traced at least as far back as Socrates, as depicted in Plato's *Euthyphro*.<sup>12</sup> In this dialogue, Socrates tasks the seemingly-wise Euthyphro to explain to him “the nature of piety and impiety” (ποιόν τι τὸ εὐσεβὲς...εἶναι καὶ ἀσεβὲς).<sup>13</sup> This question is especially pressing for Socrates, as he prepares to defend himself against charges of corrupting the youth by introducing new gods in place of the old.<sup>14</sup> However, as we might expect, Socrates thoroughly undercuts every attempt by Euthyphro to answer his inquiry. Numerous prominent philosophers throughout antiquity would take up Socrates's challenge of defining piety, many of whom devoted entire treatises to the topic.<sup>15</sup> Philo, too, may have written an independent treatment of εὐσέβεια.<sup>16</sup>

This topic became an important point of contrast between the competing philosophical schools of the Epicureans and Stoics as evidenced through the Epicureans Lucretius and Philodemus and the Stoic Epictetus. For these

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<sup>12</sup> See also Xenophon, *Mem.* 4.6.2–4 and 4.3.4–16 where Xenophon depicts Socrates defines the pious man as he who pleases the gods through state-sanctioned sacrificial practices—a definition Plato's Socrates refutes in *Euthyphr.* 14E–15A. See also, Chris Emlyn-Jones, “Socrates, Plato, and Piety,” *Mediterranean Studies* 2 (1990): 21–28.

<sup>13</sup> Plato, *Euthyphr.* 5C.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 2A–3B.

<sup>15</sup> The Hellenistic philosophers Bias, Zeno, Pythagoras, and Theophrastus (successor to Aristotle in the peripatetic school) are all remembered for writing works concerning the nature of piety, its inverse impiety (ἀσέβεια), and its excess, superstition (δεισιδαιμονία); see Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Phil.* books 1, 5.2, 7, and 8. Additionally, the Roman Stoic and tutor to the Emperor Nero, Cornutus, describes the dual purpose of his treatise, *Compendium of the Traditions of Greek Theology*, was to learn how “to practice piety but also [how] not to practice superstition” (εἰς τὸ εὐσεβεῖν ἀλλὰ μὴ εἰς τὸ δεισιδαιμονεῖν; *Theol. Graec.* 35, p. 76 l. 12–13).

<sup>16</sup> See fn. 37 below.

philosophers, true piety did not *merely* consist in dutiful ritual observance.<sup>17</sup> Rather, a correct knowledge about the divine that shunned superstitious belief was essential to piety. In *On the Nature of Things*, Lucretius laments that humanity has dreamed up for itself such terrible gods whom they must appease and fear lest they suffer divine wrath.<sup>18</sup> Lucretius poetically expounds:

It is no piety (*pietas*) to show oneself often with covered head, turning towards a stone and approaching every altar, none to fall prostrate upon the ground and to spread open the palms before shrines of the gods, none to sprinkle altars with the blood of beasts in showers and to link vow to vow; but rather to be able to survey all things with tranquil mind. (*De. Rer. Nat.* 5.1198–1203 [Rouse, rev. Smith, LCL])

According to Daniel Ullucci, such statements are indicative of philosophers' contestation over the meaning and purpose ascribed to myths and ritual practices by other intellectuals and the masses.<sup>19</sup> At stake for some of these philosophers was the legacy and legitimacy of their schools. For example, Philodemus contends that Epicurus, like Socrates, was slandered with accusations of impiety, when in fact he was more pious than his superstitious critics.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that such philosophers often did not reject the practice of sacrifice or other rituals in of themselves, rather they reject the meaning given to them. See Daniel Ullucci, "Contesting the Meaning of Animal Sacrifice," in *Ancient Mediterranean Sacrifice*, ed. Jennifer W. Knust and Zsuzsanna Várhelyi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 57–74. For example, Epicureans participated in traditional religious practices as evidenced in Cicero, *Nat. d.* 1.17.45; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Phil.* 10.120; see Attridge, "The Philosophical Critique of Religion," 51–53; see also 63–64.

<sup>18</sup> See Kirk Summers, "Lucretius and the Epicurean Tradition of Piety," *Classical Philology* 90 (1995): 32–57.

<sup>19</sup> On competition philosophers and other elite cultural producers on the meaning and purpose of sacrifice, see Daniel Ullucci, "Contesting the Meaning of Animal Sacrifice," 57–74.

<sup>20</sup> Around the middle to late first century B.C.E. Philodemus wrote *On the Gods*, and *On the Way of Life of the Gods*, and *On Piety (de Pietate)*, in which he defends Epicurus's own virtue of piety against slanders of impiety and atheism; see Dirk Obbink, *On Piety: Part 1, Critical Text with Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1996). For a papyrus fragment of Epicurus own discussion on the "essence of piety" (τὸ βέβαιον εὐσεβείας) dating to reign of Augustus, see P.Oxy. 2.215 (= Epicurus

Epictetus, writing in the late first century C.E., provides an excellent example of how not only one Roman Stoic defined piety, but how he represented and critiqued competing notions of piety held by Epicureans. In his *Enchiridion*, Epictetus presents the topic of piety in the following way:

In piety towards the gods (τῆς περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσεβείας), I would have you know, the chief element is this, to have right opinions about them—as existing and as administering the universe well and justly—and to have set yourself to obey them and to submit to everything that happens, and to follow it voluntarily, in the belief that it is being fulfilled by the highest intelligence. For if you act in this way, you will never blame the gods, nor find fault with them for neglecting you. (*Ench.* 31 [Oldfather, LCL])

For Epictetus, true piety entails not only a correct knowledge about the Divine, but also a correct practice that rationally corresponds to the true nature of the divine. Regarding his proscribed Stoic practice, Epictetus continues, “whoever attends to his desiring and his avoiding as he ought, in this very way he attends to piety (εὐσεβείας).”<sup>21</sup> In his *Discourses*, Epictetus summons Epicurus and goads the infamous founder of his rival philosophical school to answer his question, “What do you think of piety (τὸ εὐσεβές) and reverence (τὸ ὅσιον)?”<sup>22</sup> Epictetus then has Epicurus respond with a stereotypical summary of Epicurean theology: the gods do not exist or at least do not care about human affairs; the piety of the masses is a lie,

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11 CPF, ed. Obbink); Attridge, “Philosophical Critique of Religion,” 53. For Epictetus’s critique of Epicurean piety, see *Diatr.* 2.20; See also, Dieter Kaufmann-Bühler, “Eusebeia,” *RAC* 6 (1966): 997–99. See also, Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Phil.* 10.123 (Hicks, LCL): “Not the man who denies the gods worshipped by the multitude, but he who affirms of the gods what the multitude believes about them is truly impious (ἀσεβής).”

<sup>21</sup> Epictetus, *Ench.* 31: ὅστις ἐπιμελεῖται τοῦ ὀρέγεσθαι ὡς δεῖ καὶ ἐκκλίνειν, ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ εὐσεβείας ἐπιμελεῖται. On this practice of controlling desires and aversions, see esp. Epictetus, *Ench.* 1–2.

<sup>22</sup> Epictetus, *Disc.* 2.22.22: τὸ εὐσεβές καὶ τὸ ὅσιον ποῖόν τί σοι φαίνεται.

invented by sophists and legislators attempting to scare people into morality (*Disc.* 2.22.23). What follows from Epictetus is a wry, sarcastic tirade against the Epicurean position, poking at its irrelevance for historic Greek cities and ridiculousness for daily life (*Disc.* 2.22.24–37, esp. 2.22.26). “Well done, philosopher,” Epictetus sarcastically sneers, “you have benefited our citizens, and recovered the youth who were already slipping into contempt for the gods.”<sup>23</sup> Hence, with his characteristic satirical style, Epictetus undercuts the credibility of a competing theory of piety, as well as further clears away any doubt among his audience about the superiority of the Stoic definition of piety. By no means was Epictetus’s scripted dialogue the last word on the subject. Rather, we should imagine this text as materializing one moment of a wider cultural debate among various philosophers and other religious experts who evoked and redefined piety in order to authorize their teachings and to monopolize the honor and prestige associated with holding the correct knowledge of the divine.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.22.24: εὖ, φιλόσοφε: ὠφέλησας ἡμῶν τοὺς πολίτας, ἀνεκτήσω τοὺς νέους ῥέποντας ἤδη πρὸς καταφρόνησιν τῶν θεῶν.

<sup>24</sup> It is beyond the scope of this present dissertation to provide a comprehensive analysis of this cultural debate among philosophers and religious experts over the nature of piety. Nevertheless, we will be able to get a glimpse of the socio-political contours and stakes of this debate through our close readings of Philo and Plutarch. Another scholar producing ground-breaking work on this topic is Daniel Ullucci. See Ullucci, “Toward a Typology of Religious Experts in the Ancient Mediterranean,” in *“The One who Sows Bountifully”: Essays in Honor of Stanley K. Stowers*, ed. Caroline Johnson Hodge, Saul M. Olyan, Daniel Ullucci, and Emma Wasserman, *Brown Judaic Studies* 356 (Providence: Brown University, 2013), 89–103; “What Did He Say? The Ideas of Religious Experts and the 99%,” in *Religious Competition in the Third Century C.E.: Jews, Christians, and the Greco-Roman World*, ed. Nathaniel P. DesRosiers, Jordan D. Rosenblum, and Lily C. Vuong (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 21–31; “Competing for the Gods’ Portion,” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL, Baltimore, MD, November 2013).

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL TURN TO MYSTERIES

By the first century C.E., allusions to the initiation rites of mysteries had become a recognizable trope within philosophical discourse, having been established as early as Plato's writings.<sup>25</sup> As Jan N. Bremmer observes, although the aims and ritual procedures differed according to the god(s) venerated and location, such "initiation rituals" (τελεταί) were generally perceived to constitute a similar phenomenon, collectively identified as "mysteries" (μυστήρια).<sup>26</sup> According to Geert Roskam, the adoption of mystery terminology to describe philosophical opinions and practice makes sense since the domains of mysteries and philosophy share much in common:

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<sup>25</sup> See Plato, *Phaed.* 69C–D; *Phaedr.* 249C, 250B–C; *Symp.* 209E–210A; *Theaet.* 156A. For more on the allusions to mystery cults in Plato, see Édouard des Places *Etudes Platoniciennes: 1929–1979*, EPRO 90 (Leiden, 1981), esp. his chapter, "Platon et la langue des mystères," 83–98; Heinrich Dörrie "Mysterien (in Kult und Religion) und Philosophie," in *Die Orientalischen Religionen in Römerreich*, ed. Maarten J. Vermaseren (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 341–62, esp. 343–44; Günter Bornkamm, "μυστήριον," *TDNT* 4:808–10; Christoph Riedwig, *Mysterienterminologie bei Platon, Philon, und Kelmens von Alexandrien* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987); Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the Gods*, 201–205; Francesc Casadesús Bordoy, "Dionysian Ethusiasm in Plato," in *Redefining Dionysos*, ed. Alberto Bernabé, Miguel Herrero de Jáuregui, Ana Isabel Jiménez San Cristóbal, and Racquel Martín Hernández (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 386–400. See also, Christina Schefer, "Rhetoric as Part of an Initiation into the Mysteries: A New Interpretation of the Platonic *Phaedrus*," in *Plato as Author: The Rhetoric of Philosophy* (ed. Ann N. Michelini; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2003), 175–96. Schefer argues that Plato not only references mystery terminology and experiences in his dialogue *Phaedrus*, but goes so far as to present the whole dialogue as an actual mystery initiation which portrays Socrates as both initiate and hierophant.

<sup>26</sup> Jan N. Bremmer, *Initiation into the Mysteries of the Ancient World*, MZAW 1 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), xiii. As Bremmer observes, "while the Eleusinian mysteries seem to have promised well-being and material happiness in this life and the next...those of Samotraces promised safety at sea...while the Korymbantic initiators promised people a cure from madness" (p. xiii). While no singular definition of "mysteries" can capture the diversity of beliefs and practices identified as "mysteries," Bremmer offers the following list of typical characteristics or family traits: a secret and "emotionally impressive" initiation ritual, which was voluntary, performed at night, involved a preliminary purification, cost participants money, and promised rewards for this life and in the next (p. xii). Except for the Mithras cult, they were generally open to men and women, regardless of their freedom or age (p. xii). For a brief overview of the history of scholarship on ancient mysteries, see *ibid.*, vii–xiv. See also the classic treatment, Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987); and more recently, Hugh Bowden, *Mystery Cults of the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

...they share the same point of departure, make similar demands, pursue the same final end, and make use of similar means. These similarities contribute to a fusion of the two domains: the different phases in a philosopher's life — from his 'conversion' to philosophy, through the long, arduous road of προκοπή [progress], up to the final τέλος — appear to correspond very well to the different phases which the adept in a mystery cult has to go through.<sup>27</sup>

In Plato's dialogue *Phaedo*, Socrates describes the practice of temperance (σωφροσύνη), justice (δικαιοσύνη), bravery (ἀνδρεία), and prudence (φρόνησις) as purifying rites equivalent to the initiation ceremonies established within the Dionysian "mystery rites" (τελεταί) that prepare one to dwell with the gods.<sup>28</sup> According to Socrates, the mystics who had established the Dionysian mysteries are those who had philosophized correctly (οἱ πεφιλοσοφηκότες ὀρθῶς).<sup>29</sup> This position is echoed in Lucian's *The Runaways* (late second century C.E.), in which the personification of Philosophy explains that she is the source of the mysteries and Egyptian religion:

and then down to Egypt; and after associating with their priests and prophets and instructing them in religion (τὰ θεῖα παιδεύσασα)...and then to Thrace, where I conversed with Eumolpus and Orpheus, whom I sent in advance to Greece, one of them, Eumolpus, to give them mysteries (τελέσειεν), as he had learned all about religion (τὰ θεῖα) from me... (*Fug.* 8 [Harmon, LCL])

If the founding mystics are in some sense philosophers whose established myths and rituals are intended to lead initiates toward virtues at home within philosophical *askēsis*, then it is within the domain of philosophy itself that Greek

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<sup>27</sup> Geert Roskam, "'And a great silence filled the temple...': Plutarch on the Connections between Mystery Cults and Philosophy," in *Estudios Sobre Plutarco Misticismo y Religiones Místicas en la Obra de Plutarco: Acta del VII Simposio Español sobre Plutarco (Palma de Mallorca, 2-4 de Noviembre de 2000)* (ed., Aurelio Pérez Jiménez and Francesc Casadesús Bordoy; Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 2001), 221-32; quote from 222.

<sup>28</sup> Plato, *Phaed.* 69C.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 69D.

mysteries find their actual (and derivative) meaning. By subordinating the domain of the mysteries to philosophy, Socrates lays claims to the cultural legitimacy popularly ascribed to the ritual expertise of mystagogues with the rhetorical effect of adding validation to his philosophical *askēsis* (*Phaedo* 69C). We find further deployment of this mystery-metaphor in Aristotle, Chrysippus, Cicero, Quintilian, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.<sup>30</sup>

When ancient philosophers framed their philosophical knowledge of the divine in terms of mystery terminology, they traded upon the cultural prestige ascribed to the domain of Greek and Egyptian mysteries as repositories of ancient wisdom—thus increasing the cachet of their expertise and claim to true knowledge about the divine. While the initiation rites and their interpretations may have been kept secret, the mysteries and their corresponding associations were relatively well-known, especially in Greece and Asia Minor, given their exposure through public processions through cities inviting potential initiates to join, inscriptions, and reference in literature.<sup>31</sup> According to Roman historian Peter Van Nuffelen,

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<sup>30</sup> Aristotle, *Eudemos* frag. 10 Ross (Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 382DE); Chrysippus, *SVF* II.42 (Plutarch, *Stoic. rep.* 1035A–B); Cicero, *De or.* 1.206; Quintilian, *Inst.* 5.13.59–60; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Comp.* 25.5–6; see Roderich Kirchner, “Die Mysterien der Rhetorik: Zur Mysteriennmetapher in rhetoriktheoretischen Texten,” *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 148 (2005): 165–80. On the analogies that exist between philosophy and the mysteries, see Dörrie, “Mysterien,” esp. 344–46, 356–60; Bornkamm, *TDNT* 4:808–10.

<sup>31</sup> On the processional route of the mysteries of Artemis in Ephesus, see Rogers, *Sacred Identity of Ephesos*, 80–126; idem, *The Mysteries of Artemis*, 135–40. Examples of inscriptions include the Rule of the Andanian Mysteries (92/91 B.C.E.) in Marvin W. Meyer, ed., *The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook: Sacred Texts of the Mystery Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean World* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987), 51–59; the Rule of the Iobacchoi in Meyer, *Ancient Mysteries*, 95–99. On inscriptions made by associations of initiates in Asia Minor, see esp. Philip Harland, “Christ-Bearers and Fellow-Initiates: Local Cultural Life and Christian Identity in Ignatius’ Letters,” *JECS* 11 (2003), 481–99 (see also his bibliography concerning ancient processions on p. 488 n. 17). For references to mysteries in literature, see e.g., Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 2.2–3; Apuleius, *Metam.* 8.23–31; 11; Catullus, *Poem* 63; Lucian, *Alex.* 38; Pausanias, *Descr.* 4.33.3–6; 6.26.1–2. See also Meyer’s collection of sources in *Ancient Mysteries*.



numerous intellectuals during the early Roman Empire, including the religious antiquarian Varro (116–27 B.C.E.), the Stoic philosophers Chaeremon (fl. 50–60 C.E.) and Cornutus (fl. 60 C.E.), and, as we shall see, Plutarch, assumed that sage theologians and lawgivers had created sacred lore and rituals, including those celebrated in the mysteries, as symbolic repositories of metaphysical and ethical truth concerning the cosmos.<sup>32</sup> Initiation rites of the mysteries could be trusted as “loci of truth *par excellence*,” because of their strict regulations regarding the transmission and preservation of sacred traditions and their silent secrecy to the public.<sup>33</sup> Central to the philosophical turn to the mysteries is the assertion that whatever benefits religious experts of the mysteries claimed to effect for their initiates through their elaborate rites are properly achieved through the rigorous teaching and ascetic lifestyle of virtue taught by the sage philosopher. In conjunction with their appeals to piety, philosophers attempted to persuade both insiders and outsiders about the legitimacy and superiority of their expertise over against claims made by other priests, mystagogues, and philosophers.

Let us now attend to how Philo and Plutarch’s appeals to piety and the mysteries served to legitimate their interpretation of the divine as well as their status over against their inscribed superstitious others. By observing how this

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<sup>32</sup> Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the Gods*, 27–47; see also Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 78–85. Such a turn is indicative of a broader cultural assumption that esteemed the religious wisdom of the ancestors, exemplified in the following passage from Cicero, *Har. resp.* 19 (Watts, LCL): “In the first place, speaking for myself, I look for authority and guidance in religious observance to our ancestors, whose wisdom seems to me to have been so unquestionable that those who are able, I will not say to reach the level of, but only to have gained an insight into, their sagacity, themselves possess sagacity which is sufficient, and more than sufficient.”

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

philosophical discourse on piety operates within each author's writings, we can better appreciate how 1 Timothy's proclamation, "great is the mystery of piety" might serve socio-political aims and effects analogous to those of Philo and Plutarch.

## THE PURE PIETY OF PHILO

We first turn to Philo of Alexandria, who flourished during the early-to-mid first century C.E. Philo's representation of piety (εὐσέβεια) as the source of all virtue and intrinsic to the Jewish constitution, namely, the Mosaic Law, engages the discourse on piety operative in other Greek philosophy.<sup>34</sup> As Gregory E. Sterling observes, Philo assigns an even greater importance to εὐσέβεια than it had received in Greek philosophy, employing the εὐσέβεια word group 196 times and its counterpart ἀσέβεια (impiety) 196 times—a frequency much greater than many other Greek philosophers.<sup>35</sup> Like the Greek philosophers Bias, Zeno, Pythagoras, and Theophrastus,<sup>36</sup> Philo also seems to have composed a lost treatise *On Piety*.<sup>37</sup> In *The*

<sup>34</sup> See Gregory E. Sterling, "The Queen of Virtues," *The Studia Philonica Annual* 18 (2006): 103–23. This reading is further warranted given the fact that the vast majority of occurrences of εὐσέβεια within the Septuagint are found in 4 Maccabees, a text that frames Judaism as a philosophy *par excellence*,<sup>34</sup> that exemplifies "pious reason" (εὐσεβὴς λογισμὸς). See esp. 4 Macc. 1:1–4; 5:22–24; 6:31; 7:4, 16; 8:1; 13:1; 15:23; 16:1, 4; 18:1–2, 4; see also 4 Macc. 5:31; 7:1; 13:7 On the presentation of Judaism as a form of philosophy found both in 4 Macc. and Philo, see Gregory E. Sterling, ed., *The Ancestral Philosophy: Hellenistic Philosophy in Second Temple Judaism (Essays of David Winston)* (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2001), 2.

<sup>35</sup> Sterling, "The Queen of Virtues," 105. Sterling has broken down Philo's use as follows: εὐσέβεια (162 times), εὐσεβέω (16 times), εὐσεβής (18 times), ἀσέβεια (93 times), ἀσεβέω (17 times), ἀσέβημα (16 times), and ἀσεβής (69 times). See also the helpful concordance from which this list was generated, Peder Borgen, Kårl Fuglseth, and Roald Skarsten, *The Philo Index: A Complete Greek Word Index to the Writings of Philo of Alexandria Lemmatized and Computer Generated* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

<sup>36</sup> See Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Phil.* books 1, 5.2, 7, and 8.

*Worst is Accustomed to Attack the Better*, Philo takes over Euthyphro's inept attempt to answer Socrates's question, "What is the nature of piety?" (ποιόν τι τὸ εὐσεβὲς...εἶναι).<sup>38</sup> Philo nuances Euthyphro's reply that piety is a kind of "service" (θεραπεία) rendered to the divine akin to the service that servants offer their masters in order to take into account Socrates's valid critique that such a definition wrongfully implies that the divine is in need of something.<sup>39</sup> According to Philo, pious service renders a benefit to the devoted servants themselves, gradually improving their character through obedience and endearing them to the divine.<sup>40</sup> The prize of "unadulterated and pure piety" (εἰλικρινῇ καὶ καθαρὰν εὐσέβειαν), Philo states in *On Abraham* is "friendship" (φιλία) with God.<sup>41</sup> Thus equipped with a notion of God derived from the Septuagint, Philo is able to do what Euthyphro can't: answer Socrates.

It is within this philosophical vein of moral development that Philo depicts "piety and holiness" as the "queen of the virtues" (τῆς ἡγεμονίδος τῶν ἀρετῶν,

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<sup>37</sup> The existence of Philo's *On Piety* (*De pietate*) is argued on the basis of a few fragments ascribed to the work and manuscript titles that include εὐσέβεια among the topical virtues treated by Philo in his *On Virtues*. For more on this argument (and its detractors), see James R. Royse, "The Text of Philo's *De virtutibus*," *SPhiloA* 18 (2006): 81–94; Sterling, "Queen of Virtues," 105–112.

<sup>38</sup> Plato, *Euthyphr.* 5C. Cf. John Glucker, "Piety, Dogs, and a Platonic Reminiscence: Philo, *Quod deterius* 54–56 and Plato," *Illinois Classical Studies* 18 (1993): 131–38, who suggests that Philo relied upon his notes of the Platonic dialogue, *Euthyphro*, when constructing his argument in *That the Worse Attacks the Better*. Glucker argues that had Philo set before him Plato's text, he could not have resisted the opportunity to employ a more atticized rendering of the word 'dog,' which is clearly found in the text of the dialogue.

<sup>39</sup> Philo, *Det.* 55–56; see Plato, *Euthyphr.*, 14E–15A.

<sup>40</sup> Philo, *Det.* 56.

<sup>41</sup> Philo, *Abr.* 129.

εὐσεβείας καὶ ὁσιότητος)<sup>42</sup> from which all other virtues emanate.<sup>43</sup> Philo includes piety within the four so-called cardinal philosophical virtues of temperance (σωφροσύνη)/self-control (ἐγκρατεία), prudence (φρόνησις), justice (δικαιοσύνη), and courage (ἀνδρεία).<sup>44</sup> For example, when Philo describes the Jewish practice of attending synagogue as exhibiting the ideals of philosophical life, he writes:

Even now this practice is retained, and the Jews every seventh day occupy themselves with the philosophy of their fathers, dedicating that time to the acquiring of knowledge and the study of the truths of the nature. For what are our places of prayer throughout the cities but schools of prudence (φρονήσεως) and courage (ἀνδρείας) and temperance (σωφροσύνης) and justice (δικαιοσύνης) and also of piety (εὐσεβείας), holiness (ὁσιότητος) and every virtue by which duties to God and men are discerned and rightly performed? (*Mos.* 2.216 [Colson, LCL])

Piety serves as an essential virtue for the achievement of the τέλος or end of philosophical practice, namely a life in accordance with nature (κατὰ φύσιν)<sup>45</sup> and

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<sup>42</sup> Philo, *Spec.* 95. Sterling (“Queen of Virtues,” 120 n.105) notes that Philo uses two terms: ἡγεμονίς (*Decal* 119 where piety is linked with holiness [ὁσιότης]; *Virt.* 95, again linked with humanity [φιλανθρωπία]) and βασιλὶς (*Spec.* 4.147). Cf. *Abr.* 270 where faith (πίστις) is described as the queen of virtues (τὴν βασιλίδαν τῶν ἀρετῶν).

<sup>43</sup> Philo also describes piety as “the greatest” (*Praem.* 53); “the leading and greatest virtue” (*Spec.* 4.97); “the finest and most profitable” (*Mos.* 1.146); and “the source of the virtues” (*Decal.* 52); Sterling, “Queen of Virtues,” 120. See also *Abr.* 114; *Congr.* 130; *Opif.* 154 for his superlative description of θεοσέβεια.

<sup>44</sup> For Philo’s knowledge of the traditional list of philosophical virtues used especially by the Stoics, see *Leg.* 1.63–65. For Philo’s inclusion of εὐσέβεια alongside and even substituted within the traditional list of four virtues, see *Cher.* 96 (substituted in for self-control); *Sacr.* 27; *Det.* 72, 73, 114, 143 (for courage); *Sobr.* 40 (for courage); *Abr.* 24; *Ios.* 143; 246; *Mos.* 2.216 (added to the four, along with holiness, ὁσιότητος); *Spec.* 2.63; 4.97, 135 (for courage), 170; *Praem.* 160 (added to the four, along with holiness, ὁσιότητα); *Prob.* 83; see Sterling, “Queen of Virtues,” 121 n.121. Cf. Plato, *Lach.* 199D; *Prot.* 330B; *Gorg.* 507C; Helen North, “Canons and Hierarchies of the Cardinal Virtues in Greek and Latin Literature,” in *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honor of Harry Caplan*, ed. Luitpold Wallach (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 165–83.

<sup>45</sup> Philo, *Migr.* 128: “And this is the end (τέλος) which is celebrated among those who study philosophy (φιλοσοφήσασιν) in the best manner, namely, to live in accordance with nature (τὸ ἀκολούθως τῇ φύσει ζῆν). And this takes place when the mind, entering into the path of virtue,

with God (the Platonic ὁμοίωσις θεῷ<sup>46</sup>), as marked by perfection of virtue,<sup>47</sup> contemplation,<sup>48</sup> happiness,<sup>49</sup> and immortality.<sup>50</sup> As Sterling observes, Philo eclectically draws upon Platonic, Stoic, and Neopythagorean traditions in his presentations of the τέλος of the philosophically attuned pious life.<sup>51</sup> Through his interjection of piety among the cardinal virtues of philosophy, Philo attempts to make room for, and thus legitimate, his theological position within the philosophical discourse of what constitutes “the blessed and happy life” (μακαρίαν καὶ εὐδαίμονα ζωὴν),<sup>52</sup> the τέλος of men.

Sterling has argued that the reason why piety holds such a preeminent position within Philo’s mindset is because this virtue is intertwined with Philo’s conviction that “everything, including ethics, begins with a proper belief in the

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treads in the steps of right reason (ὀρθοῦ λόγου), and follows God, remembering his commandments, and at all times and in all places confirming them both by word and deed” (Yonge).

<sup>46</sup> See Philo, *Fug.* 63, where he explicitly quotes Plato’s *Theaetetus* 176A–B which describes “becoming like god, as far as it is possible, as becoming holy and just alongside of prudence” (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν· ὁμοίωσις δὲ δίκαιον καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι); see also Plato, *Resp.* 2.383C (Emlyn-Jones and Preddy, LCL): “our guardians are to be god-fearing (θεωσεβεῖς) and high-minded as far as possible for a human being” (καθ’ ὅσον ἀνθρώπῳ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον οἷόν τε).

<sup>47</sup> Philo, *Opif.* 156; *Leg.* 3.140, 196; *Deus.* 122; *Praem.* 11, 27, 160; *Contempl.* 72; see also *Leg.* 1.47. In *On the Virtues*, and even beginning as early as the preceding treatise *On the Special Laws* 4.132, Philo demonstrates how the legal injunctions, narratives, and biographies present within the Mosaic texts exemplify esteemed Greek virtues of justice (δικαιοσύνη; *Spec.* 4.135–238), courage (ἀνδρεία; *Virt.* 1–50), humanity (φιλανθρωπία; *Virt.* 51–174), as well as repentance (μετάνοια; *Virt.* 175–186) and nobility (εὐγένεια; *Virt.* 187–227).

<sup>48</sup> Philo, *Mut.* 76; *Fug.* 141, *Mos.* 2:66; *Spec.* 3.191; *Praem.* 11.

<sup>49</sup> Philo, *Opif.* 172; *Praem.* 11, 160, *Contempl.* 90.

<sup>50</sup> See Philo, *Fug.* 63; *Praem.* 11; *QG* 1.10; Sterling, “Queen of Virtues,” 118–19.

<sup>51</sup> Sterling, “Queen of Virtues,” 118.

<sup>52</sup> Philo, *Opif.* 156; *Abr.* 202.

existence of God and the divine governance of the kosmos.”<sup>53</sup> For Philo, as for the Pastoral Epistles, particular affirmations about God are prerequisites for the proper interpretation of scripture and for piety.<sup>54</sup> In the conclusion of *On the Creation of the Cosmos*, Philo lists a number of these affirmations that must be impressed upon our souls:

He, then, who has learned these things...that God is and exists, and that he who truly exists is one, and that he made the cosmos and made it unique, making it, as was said, similar to himself in respect of its being one, and that he always takes thought for what has come into being, this person will lead a blessed life of well-being, marked as he is by the doctrines of piety and holiness. (*Opif.* 172 [Runia, PACS])<sup>55</sup>

Any position that contradicts one of these essential theological tenets is categorized as “impious,” a vice Philo defines as “the greatest evil.”<sup>56</sup> Philo also describes as impious any theological position that contrasts with Platonically inspired positions held about God, namely his immutability,<sup>57</sup> transcendence,<sup>58</sup> perfection and thus

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<sup>53</sup> Sterling, “Queen of Virtues,” 121. See Philo, *Decal.* 52: “The best beginning of all that exists is God; just as piety is (the best beginning) of the virtues” (ἀρχὴ δ’ ἀρίστη πάντων μὲν τῶν ὄντων θεός, ἀρετῶν δ’ εὐσέβεια). And conversely, “atheism is the fount of all unrighteous actions” (πηγὴ δὲ πάντων ἀδικημάτων ἀθεότης) (*Decal.* 91).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Plato, *Resp.* 2.382E–383A; 386A: “Concerning the gods then,” said I, “this is the sort of thing that we must allow or not allow them to hear from childhood up, if they are to honor the gods and their fathers and mothers, and not to hold their friendship with one another in light esteem” (Shorey, LCL).

<sup>55</sup> In *Opif.* 170–171, Philo describes each of these “five beautiful lessons” from Moses in more detail, contrasting each against contrary theological positions to highlight their significance. According to Philo, it is important to affirm God’s existence in the face of atheism, his unity against polytheism, his creation against those who believe in the eternity of matter, the singularity of the world against those who believe in many worlds, and his providence (presumably against those who would detract from this position, Philo does not explicitly set up a contrast here).

<sup>56</sup> Philo, *Congr.* 160; see also Sterling, “Queen of Virtues,” 115–16; cf. *Ebr.* 39.

<sup>57</sup> Philo, *Deus* 22; Cf. Plato, *Resp.* 2.380D–883A.

<sup>58</sup> Philo, *Praem.* 40; *Contempl.* 3; *Legat.* 5.

lack of any need,<sup>59</sup> and finally his exemption from any charge of evil.<sup>60</sup> Philo bristles against any association of the Divine with base passions,<sup>61</sup> anthropomorphism, or image crafting, which he deems idolatrous.<sup>62</sup>

Philo's engagement with the philosophical discourse on piety served his broader rhetorical agenda of building solidarity among Alexandrian Jewish intellectuals.<sup>63</sup> As John J. Collins has observed in his introduction to his seminal work on the negotiation of Jewish identity amid Greek and Roman hegemonic culture, "any group that holds unusual views is inevitably under pressure to establish its plausibility, not only to win the respect of outsiders, but primarily to maintain the allegiance of its members."<sup>64</sup> Philo likely writes amid a hostile Alexandrian environment, perhaps still coming to terms with the deadly aftermath of a period of civil unrest (38–41 C.E.) over the issue of the Alexandrian Jewish

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<sup>59</sup> Philo, *Det.* 55: Philo reprises Socrates's argument from Plato's *Euthyphro* that it would be against tradition (οὐ θέμις) to say that piety, as service directed to God (τὴν εὐσέβειαν θεοῦ θεραπείαν ὑπάξουσιν), is a way of providing anything that benefits God since it is impossible for God to want anything (being self-sufficient and perfect) and for anything to add to the Divine's superiority in all things; see also, *Leg.* 1.44; *Cher.* 45; *Mut.* 27, 46; *Decal.* 81; *Spec.* 1.2777; *Virt.* 9.

<sup>60</sup> Philo, *Opif.* 75; Plato, *Resp.* 2.379–80.

<sup>61</sup> Philo, *Sacr.* 95.

<sup>62</sup> Philo, *Leg.* 1.143; *Sacr.* 95; *Post.* 39; *Deus* 22; 59; *Ebr.* 110; *Conf.* 134; *QE* 2.45, 47; see Sterling, "Queen of Virtues," 115–116.

<sup>63</sup> For an overview of the rhetorical situation of Philo's treatises in Alexandrian politics, see David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 113–126. Dawson identifies the immediate audience of Philo's apologetic representation of Judaism as fellow intellectual Jews, as opposed to curious or sympathetic gentile Alexandrians. See esp. Victor Tcherikover, "Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered," *Eos* 48 (1956): 169–93.

<sup>64</sup> John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2000), 2.

body's status and rights as citizens within the city.<sup>65</sup> Representative of the anti-Jewish stigmatism Jews had to navigate is the Alexandrian grammarian Apion, who had argued before the emperor that Jews had no legitimate status within Alexandria, being nothing more than atheists, misanthropes, and culturally inferior barbarians.<sup>66</sup> In response to such overt prejudice, as Walter T. Wilson suggests, Philo "claims the discourse of Greek political culture as his own," in order to demonstrate that "those who belong to this [Jewish] *politeia* [constitution] embody the highest aspirations of the host culture."<sup>67</sup> With such knowledge, Philo's intellectual contemporaries could remain confident in the cultural legitimacy of their Jewish beliefs and way of life amid caustic Alexandrian criticism.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> The larger commentary project, "The Exposition," of which *De virtutibus* is apart, may have been written late in Philo's life after the civil strife of 38–41 C.E., concerning which Philo led an embassy to Emperor Gaius (Caligula) on behalf of his people who were experiencing severe persecution (see Josephus, *Ant.* 18.8). For the scholarly treatment of the place of *De virtutibus* in Philo's life, see Walter T. Wilson, *Philo of Alexandria On Virtues: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, PACS 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 8–10.

<sup>66</sup> See Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.38, 135, 148. See also Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 34/35.1.1–2, who described the Jews as misanthropic (μισανθρωπία) and only caring for their own. See also Wilson, *On Virtues*, 23–24. On the charge on misanthropy, see Philo, *Spec.* 2.29.167; cf. *Mos.* 1.16.95; Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.148; see also Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 125–148; Katell Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia Judaica: le débat autour de la 'misanthropie' des lois juives dans l'antiquité*, JSJ 76 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Isaac, *Invention of Racism*, 150–54.

<sup>67</sup> Wilson, *On Virtues*, 33–34. Wilson (pp. 25–37) argues that Dionysius of Halicarnassus provides a helpful historical analogue for understanding Philo's employment of virtues in order to tell a revisionist tale about the origins of the political institution of his community (namely of creation, the Patriarchs, and the Laws). In *Antiquitates romanae* 1.1.1–1.8.4 (7 B.C.E.), Dionysius is writing to refute certain anti-Roman perceptions that Rome was founded by a band of ethnically mixed misfits, lacking in both culture and virtue (1.4.1–3). Dionysius, too, emphasizes the humanity (φιλανθρωπία) of the Romans as demonstrated in their early leadership and legislation, thus paving the foundation for a universal polity that will be fit to rule the world; Wilson, *On Virtues*, 29–33.

<sup>68</sup> We can further locate the rhetorical situation of a number of Philo's treatises amidst an Alexandrian Jewish community coming to terms with the deadly aftermath of a period of civil unrest (38–41 C.E.) over the question of their contested status and rights as citizens within the city.



Such apologetic aims were further accomplished in Philo's use of mystery terminology to describe the Laws of Moses. In a manner that will resonate with 1 Timothy 3:16, Philo frames his presentation of the truth about the divine in mystery terminology, describing those worthy of such knowledge as practicing true piety. We see this juxtaposition of mystery terminology, piety, and knowledge about the divine especially in Philo's allegorical commentary on Genesis 3:24–4:1:

When we intend to speak about the conception of and giving birth to virtues, let the superstitious (δεισιδαίμονες) block their ears and depart; for we teach divine initiation rites (τελετὰς θείας) to the initiates worthy of the most sacred mysteries (τοὺς τελετῶν ἀξιόους τῶν ἱεροτάτων μύστας); they are the ones who practice a true and really unadorned piety (τὴν ἀληθὴ καὶ οὐσαν ὄντως ἀκαλλώπιστον εὐσέβειαν), without vanity. We will not lead as *hierophants* (ἱεροφαντήσομεν) those who are in the power of incurable evil and measure what is pure and holy with vanity of words (τύφῳ ῥημάτων), stickiness of verbiage (ὀνομάτων γλισχρότητι), and pedantry of customs (τερθρείας ἐθῶν), and nothing else. (*Cher.* 42 [trans. mine])<sup>69</sup>

According to Philo, Jews possess their own “sacred mysteries” that produce a genuine piety among their initiates. Philo proceeds to explain the allegorical meaning of why Scripture describes none of the patriarchs, including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, as “knowing” their wives as Adam “knew his wife Eve” (Gen. 4:1). According to Philo, this implies that the patriarchs' wives were not impregnated by their mortal husbands, but by God (*Cher.* 45–47). Moreover, the women collectively represent virtue and thus demonstrate that virtue ultimately receives its divine seed, its generative principle, from God, who impregnates virtue

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<sup>69</sup> My translation follows the lead of Annewies van den Hoek, whose PACS commentary on this text is forthcoming.

into human souls (*Cher.* 44–46).<sup>70</sup> Philo, having been initiated into the greater mysteries of Moses (μνηθεὶς τὰ μέγιστα μυστήρια),<sup>71</sup> is privy to the secret knowledge that virtues have their beginning in God.<sup>72</sup> Equipped with “the most beautiful of all possessions, the knowledge of the Cause and of virtue” (*Cher.* 48), Jewish initiates can confidently progress toward lives of virtue and piety.

Noteworthy for our analysis of 1 Timothy 3:16 is the polemical edge of Philo’s representation of the knowledge belonging to true piety as encompassed within the sacred mysteries of the Jewish faith. Those excluded from Philo’s instruction are described as “superstitious,” afflicted by an incurable disease, a love for pompous words that clogs people’s intelligence with their “stickiness,” and overscrupulous manners.<sup>73</sup> In effect, Philo has summoned a stereotypical sophist, the common punching bag of true philosophers, to serve as a foil for the kind of ideal philosophical character he constructs as the ideal Jew.<sup>74</sup> Philo’s rhetorical evocation of the sophists simultaneously functions to denigrate other competing religious experts as shams, while legitimating his own philosophical expertise and authority on matters relating to virtue and the nature of the divine. Philo’s shaming of

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<sup>70</sup> Philo makes this same allegorical move in *Mut.* 225; on the theme of divine impregnation of the soul in Philo, see Richard A. Baer, *Philo’s Use of the Categories Male and Female* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 55–64. Cf. Plato, *Symp.* 209 in which Plato speaks about “those who are pregnant in their souls” (οἱ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς κυοῦσιν) with virtues.

<sup>71</sup> Philo, *Cher.* 49.

<sup>72</sup> Philo, *Cher.* 52.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Dionysius Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 2.19, who pejoratively describes the ridiculous foreign rites of the Great Mother as τερθρείαν μυθικήν, which were cast out upon being established in Rome.

<sup>74</sup> For example, see Philo, *Det.* 35, where Philo describes those who practice true philosophy as neither dealing in sophistry (σοφιστεύω) nor having any knowledge of pedantry of words (τερθρεία λόγων).

stereotypical sophists rhetorically positions him on the side of legitimate philosophers linked back to Socrates, who also made a point to undermine sophists at their pedantic game. As we shall see in chapter 6, the Pastoral Epistles employ a similar rhetorical strategy in characterizing their opponents as impious sophists.

What then should we make of the rhetorical function of Philo's deployment of mystery terminology in his description of the divine origin of virtue? Indeed, much has been made about what Philo's use of various terms associated with Greek mysteries may indicate about the nature of Hellenistic Judaism and even the origins of early Christianity.<sup>75</sup> A.D. Nock, in his critique of Erwin Goodenough's theory that Philo *literally* considered Judaism a mystery cult comparable to the Eleusinian mysteries in Athens, argued that,

The metaphor of initiation was by its philosophic usage redeemed from any undue association with idolatry; it was particularly appropriate, in as much as it expressed the passive and receptive attitude of mind which Philo held to be necessary.<sup>76</sup>

Naomi G. Cohen has catalogued and categorized Philo's use of mystery terminology in order to speak to the form and function of its use.<sup>77</sup> Cohen concludes that Philo's

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<sup>75</sup> See especially Erwin R. Goodenough, *By Light, Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935). Goodenough argued that Philo's use of mystery terminology was indicative of not only Philo's attempt to present Judaism as a mystery cult, but also the actual institutionalization of Hellenistic Jewish assemblies as mystery cults—a development that would greatly shape the theological imagination and sacramental practices of fledgling early Christian assemblies. Goodenough's thesis was soundly rejected by many historians, including Goodenough's contemporary A. D. Nock. See Nock, review of *By Light, Light*, by Erwin R. Goodenough, *Gnomon* 13 (1937): 156–65. For an overview, see Angela Mazzanti, "The 'Mysteries' in Philo of Alexandria," in *Italian Studies on Philo of Alexandria*, ed. Francesca Calabi (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 117–30.

<sup>76</sup> Nock, review of *By Light, Light* (by Goodenough), 164; cf. *Somn.* 1.119; *Her.* 264.

<sup>77</sup> Naomi G. Cohen, "The Mystery Terminology in Philo," in *Philo und das Neue Testament: Wechselseitige Wahrnehmungen; I. Internationales Symposium zum Corpus Judaico-Hellenisticum 1.–4. Mai 2003, Eisenach/Jena*, ed. Roland Deines and Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 173–88. Cohen has observed that when the actual content of the mystery is given in Philo, it either refers to some "philosophical mystery" regarding our knowledge of the divine or "theosophical

use of mystery terminology was metaphorical rather than literal, contrary to Goodenough,<sup>78</sup> and so was keeping with a common parlance popular within philosophic circles.<sup>79</sup> The element of secrecy conveyed by Philo's use of mystery terminology, according to Cohen, functioned "to avert the criticism of what he has called οἱ δεισιδαίμονες [the superstitious]."<sup>80</sup> Cohen identifies Philo's "superstitious" opponents as "fundamental-literalists" whose critical resistance to Philo's teaching and authority clearly agitated the philosopher.<sup>81</sup> And so, within this polemical contest over the right interpretation of the Septuagint, Philo's claim to piety and his characterization of opponents as superstitious serves to delineate boundaries among his inscribed audience, dividing the sound in mind from the corrupted.

I suggest that Philo's construction of piety as intrinsic to the Jewish faith and his framing of Jewish beliefs and practices within mystery terminology coalesce to create a Judaism plausible to a cultured Greek society that reinforced group identity. As David Dawson observes, "Philo uses this elitist language of the Greek mysteries to convince his Hellenized Jewish readership that the pinnacle of Greco-Roman

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mystery" concerning God's relation to created being (p. 178). Mystery terminology, Cohen observes, was not essential to Philo's allegorical interpretation, occurring in fewer than forty passages of Philo's enormous corpus and largely absent in passages that treat the same material that Philo has otherwise described as a "mystery" (178, 187; cf. Philo, *Cher.* 27–28).

<sup>78</sup> Contra Goodenough, see *ibid.*, 185–186. Philo despised actual mystery cults, see *Cher.* 94 (to which he associates a 'bastard piety' [νόθον εὐσέβειαν]); *Spec.* 1.319; see also Mazzanti, "'Mysteries' in Philo," 121–22.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

religious culture was now available in the form of their very own Jewish scripture—if only they could understand its deeper meaning and significance.”<sup>82</sup> More than mere popular parlance, the use of mystery terminology to describe one’s knowledge about the divine could signal one’s participation within a broader philosophical tradition or discussion dating back to Socrates regarding the nature of the divine and virtue, including piety. To frame one’s discussion about the divine’s relation to created order in terms of mystery terminology could have signified one’s superior aptitude with a kind of technical terminology that in itself signaled one’s legitimate standing within the cultural domain of Greek philosophy. And so, in a manner similar to Plato’s Socrates, Philo trades upon the cultural legitimacy ascribed to the specialized competence of mystagogues in order to validate his authorial voice as an expert in the correct knowledge about the divine. Not only does Philo’s rhetoric present himself as communicating with philosophical mastery, but also as instructing with the cultural expertise of a *hierophant*.

## PLUTARCH’S REVERENT READING OF MYSTERIES

We next turn to the Middle Platonist Plutarch, whose corpora dates to the late first and early second centuries C.E. In his treatise *On Superstition*,<sup>83</sup> piety

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<sup>82</sup> Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 121. Dawson draws this conclusion in reference to Philo’s portrayal of the translation of the Hebrew bible into Greek as performed by no mere translators, but by “hierophants and prophets” (ἱεροφάντες καὶ προφῆταις; *Mos.* 2.40).

<sup>83</sup> While scholars tend to accept Plutarch’s authorship of *On Superstition*, doubts remain among many on account of this text’s late attestation and the negative treatment it gives to the myths of Apollo and Egyptian religious ceremonies. As Morton Smith advises, “caution should be observed in citing material from [*On Superstition*] as evidence of Plutarch’s usage” (Morton Smith, “De Superstitione (Moralia 2 164E–171F),” in *Plutarch’s Theological Writings and Early Christian Literature*, ed. Hanz Dieter Betz (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 1–35. Smith goes so far as to say the problem of this text’s

(εὐσέβεια) represents the Aristotelian golden mean between atheism and superstition (*Superst.* 171F).<sup>84</sup> Piety constitutes a correct and rational knowledge of the gods that is tainted neither by emotional fear (superstition) nor an irrational overcompensation against such hysterics, that denies the existence of the divine (atheism).<sup>85</sup> The superstitious, whom Plutarch describes as taking up barbaric ritual practices and rites,<sup>86</sup> are especially notorious since they “shame and transgress the divine and ancestral dignity of piety (εὐσέβειας)” (*Superst.* 166B).<sup>87</sup> However, when Plutarch describes his knowledge of the divine in other treatises, he tends to use the Greek term ὁσιότης rather than εὐσέβεια. Ὀσιότης connotes a conformity to divine standards, and so can be translated as ‘holiness,’ ‘reverence,’ ‘righteousness,’ or as Jon D. Mikalson suggests, ‘religious correctness.’<sup>88</sup> Within the scope of philosophical discourse, ὁσιότης carries a close valence to εὐσέβεια, such that Plato’s Socrates can

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authorship is comparable to that of the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles (*ibid.*, 6). See also Howard Moeller, *Plutarch on Superstition*, rev. ed. (Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1963), 96–147.

<sup>84</sup> Plutarch states: “For thus it is that some persons, in trying to escape superstition (δεισιδαιμονίαν), rush into a rough and hardened atheism (ἀθεότης), thus overleaping piety (εὐσέβειαν) which lies between” (*Superst.* 14.171F [modified from Babbitt, LCL]).

<sup>85</sup> While atheism is merely “deceived reasoning” (λόγος διεψευσμένος), superstition is a fearful and dangerous “emotion birthed from false reasoning” (πάθος ἐκ λόγου ψευδοῦς ἐγγεγεννημένον) (Plutarch, *Superst.* 2.165C). For Plutarch’s view that superstition is often the cause of atheism, see *ibid.*, 12.171A–B, 14.171F.

<sup>86</sup> Plutarch describes the superstitious man as an absurd fellow who engages in barbaric (βάρβαρος) practices such as “smearing oneself with mud and wallowing in it as a form of immersion, falling facedown to the floor, shameful besieging of the gods, and strange prostrations” (*Superst.* 3.166A–B, my own translation): πηλώσεις καταβορβορώσεις βαπτισμούς, ῥίψεις ἐπὶ πρόσωπον, αἰσχρὰς προκαθίσεις, ἀλλοκότους προσκυνήσεις.

<sup>87</sup> Plutarch, *Superst.* 3.166B (trans. my own): καταισχύνειν καὶ παρανομεῖν εἰς τὸ θεῖον καὶ πάτρων ἀξίωμα τῆς εὐσέβειας.

<sup>88</sup> Jon D. Mikalson, *Greek Popular Religion in Greek Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 11. Cp. ὁσιος, ὁσιότης, *BDAG* 728–29.

ask: “Are religious correctness (ὁσιότης) and piety (εὐσέβεια) service (θεραπεία) to the gods?” (*Euthyphr.* 13B)<sup>89</sup> As Mikalson has shown, while it is incorrect to consider ὁσιότης and εὐσέβεια as synonyms,<sup>90</sup> within Greek philosophical discourse, ‘religious correctness’ and ‘piety’ (or “proper respect for the gods,” according to Mikalson) are both contingent upon a correct knowledge of the gods and secure their benevolence.<sup>91</sup> Not only were these two terms often used together, but they were even interchanged with one another as evidenced in Plato’s *Euthyphro*<sup>92</sup> and Philo’s corpus.<sup>93</sup> Given the complementary nature of these two terms within Greek philosophical discourse, an analysis of Plutarch’s use of ὁσιότης in conjunction with his interpretation of the sacred stories (ἱεροὶ λόγοι) of the mysteries remains

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<sup>89</sup> See also Plato, *Euthyphr.* 5C–D, 12 E for ὅσιος; Glucker, “Piety,” 135.

<sup>90</sup> One of the key differences between ὁσιότης and εὐσέβεια, according to Mikalson, is that εὐσέβεια or ‘proper respect’ “is a state of mind, a reasoned emotion, a feeling of honour for and obligation and gratitude to the gods within the charis [χάρις] relationship; ‘religious correctness’ is more a state of being, of being in conformance with religious traditions and conventions concerning ‘the sacred’ (Greek Popular Religion, 169, emphasis original). Contra K. J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), esp. 248.

<sup>91</sup> Mikalson, *Greek Popular Religion*, 140–86.

<sup>92</sup> See also Plato, *Euthyphr.* 5C–D, 12 E for ὅσιος; Glucker, “Piety,” 135.

<sup>93</sup> Sterling (“The Queen of Virtues,” 112–113 n.48) makes this very argument, citing the following occasions when Philo uses εὐσέβεια in association with ὅσιος: *Legat.* 279; and in association with ὁσιότης (“religious correctness”): *Opif.* 155, 172; *Sacr.* 37; *Det.* 21; *Plant.* 35; *Ebr.* 91, 92; *Migr.* 194; *Her.* 123; *Congr.* 98; *Somn.* 2.186; *Abr.* 198; *Mos.* 1.198, 307; 2.136, 142, 192, 216, 270; *Decal.* 110, 119; *Spec.* 1.30, 54, 186; 2.63, 224; 3.127; 4.135; *Virt.* 201; *Legat.* 242. A clear example of this is *Spec.* 4.135: “therefore, concerning the queen of the virtues, piety and holiness” (περὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς ἡγεμονίδος τῶν ἀρετῶν, εὐσεβείας καὶ ὁσιότητος). By the time we reach the second century C.E., early Christian apologists Justin and Athenagoras, too, understood there to be an overlap of meaning between εὐσέβεια and ὅσιος. This observation is borne out in both Justin’s and Athenagoras’s summation of the duties of humanity under the categories of justice and piety (δικαιοσύνη καὶ εὐσέβεια) (e.g., Justin, *Dial.* 4, 23, 45, 46, 47, 93, 136; Athenagoras, *Leg.* 1, 19), which alludes to the popular philosophical *topos* concerning justice and ‘religious correctness’ (ὁσιότητος). On this *topos*, see Mikalson, *Greek Popular Religion*, 187–207.

beneficial for considering the rhetorical significance of 1 Timothy's juxtaposition of εὐσέβεια and mystery terminology.

In his work, *On Isis and Osiris*, Plutarch seeks to explain the true meaning of the sacred lore (ἱερὸς λόγος), which traditionally consist of the mythological explanation of the origins of the cult and/or the god(s),<sup>94</sup> and rites of the Egyptian mysteries of Isis. According to Plutarch, the stories concerning Osiris's death and afterlife and of Isis's struggle against Typhon along with their accompanying rituals are in fact repositories of ancient wisdom that, if interpreted correctly, disclose the nature of the universe.<sup>95</sup> As Van Nuffelen has shown, Plutarch, like numerous of his philosophical contemporaries, singled out both Greek and Egyptian mysteries "as the best place to look for unadulterated ancient knowledge, the precepts of secrecy guaranteeing its quality."<sup>96</sup> Plutarch describes the "Bearers of the Sacred Vessels" (ἱεροφόροις) and "the Keepers of the Sacred Vestments" (ἱεροστόλοις) of the Isis

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<sup>94</sup> See Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the Gods*, 52; Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 66–88; Albert Henrichs, "Hieroi logoi and hierai biblioi: the (un)written margins of the sacred in ancient Greece," *HSCP* 101 (2003): 207–66.

<sup>95</sup> As Burkett (*Ancient Mystery Cults*, 84–85) observes, Plutarch, "invokes 'teletai and sacrifices' by non-Greeks and Greeks for his thesis that there is a basic metaphysical dualism involving the good and unifying principle and its antagonist, the principle of dispersion and annihilation, working together on 'matter' which 'receives' their impact, *hyle dektike*: this is Isis, between Osiris and Typhon." See esp. *Is. Os.* 34–35.

<sup>96</sup> Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the Gods*, 37. This assumption is born out in the following statement of Plutarch: "Wherefore this very ancient opinion comes down from theologians (θεολόγων) and from lawgivers to poets and philosophers; it can be traced to no source, but it carried a strong and almost indelible conviction, and is in circulation in many places among barbarians and Greeks alike, not only in story and tradition but also in rites and sacrifices (ἐν τε τελεταῖς ἐν τε θυσίαις)" (*Is. Os.*, 369B–C [Griffiths, with emendations]). Thus for Plutarch, theologians (θεόλογοι), along with lawmakers, chronologically precede both poets like Homer and Hesiod and philosophers like Plato and Pythagoras as sources of truth about the knowledge of the divine, namely, that the lower powers are the source of evil, not the divine. Plutarch hopes to correct the false interpretations of these myths (and their cryptic cosmogony) of both Epicureans and Stoics, who have mislead their audiences on such matters (*Is. Os.* 369A–B).



cult as those “who carry in their soul, as in a box, the sacred lore about the gods (τὸν ἱερὸν λόγον περὶ θεῶν), which is pure of all superstition (δαισιδαμονίας) and vain curiosity (περιεργίας).”<sup>97</sup> In contrast to more public and popular sacred lore about other gods, especially as recounted by poets, the secrecy of the initiatory rites and sacred lore has shielded the mysteries from anything “irrational (ἄλογον) or fabulous (μυθῶδες) or produced by superstition (ὑπὸ δαισιδαμονίας).”<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, according to Plutarch, there remain plenty of incredible (ἀπίθανον) stories floating about that must be dismissed, and so all sacred lore, even those associated with the mysteries, must be analyzed for its correspondance to the truth on a case-by-case basis.<sup>99</sup>

To do this the symbolic nature of Isis’s and Osiris’s stories and rites must be decoded through the proper philosophical hermeneutic, lest one stumble into the pitfalls of either superstition or atheism, as the following passage demonstrates:

[T]hey use consecrated symbols (συμβόλοις...καθιερωμένοις), some of which are obscure and others clearer, directing the thought towards the divine though not without danger. For some, erring completely, have slipped into superstition (δαισιδαμονίαν), and others, shunning superstition like a marsh, have unwittingly fallen in turn over the precipice of atheism (ἀθεότητα). Therefore, in these matters above all, we should take as a guide into the mysteries (μυσταγωγὸν) the mode of reasoning (λόγον) provided by

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<sup>97</sup> Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 352B (Griffiths).

<sup>98</sup> Plutarch, *Is. Os.*, 353E. See also Plutarch’s *How the Young Man Should Study Poetry*, for his nuanced view of how readers should approach poetry with an allegorical hermeneutical mode of reading in order to reclaim the sagacious wisdom beneath the poetic flourish. See also, Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 58–66.

<sup>99</sup> As he introduces and closes his account of the myth of Isis and Osiris, Plutarch states that he omits “the utterly useless and superfluous features,” *Is. Os.* 355D (Griffiths); 358E; c.f., 368F; 353E; see also Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the Gods*, 58, 65–66.

philosophy (ἐκ φιλοσοφίας) and reflect reverently (ὁσίως διανοεῖσθαι) on everything said and enacted. (*Is. Os.* 378A–B [Griffiths, with my emendation])

According to Plutarch, philosophical reason (λόγος), has the inside track on truth as our mystagogue (μυσταγωγός), revealing the hidden truth to her initiates. It is *only* a philosophical reading of the mystery rites that enables true devotion to Isis and can be considered ‘reverent’ or ‘religiously correct’ (ὁσιότης).<sup>100</sup> Philosophy and reverence therefore go hand in hand. In contrast, he argues, more literal or cynical readings produce the extremes of superstition or atheism. This sentiment is further echoed in the following passage:

If you hear the matters pertaining to the gods in this way and receive the myth (μῦθον) from exegetes (ἐξηγουμένων) reverently (ὁσίως) and philosophically (φιλοσόφως), and if you perform and observe constantly the accepted rites, considering nothing is more pleasing to the gods, whether sacrifice or ritual enactment, than the true notion about them (ἀληθὴ δόξαν...περὶ θεῶν), thus you will avoid superstition (δεισιδαιμονίαν), which is no less an evil than atheism (ἀθεότητος). (*Is. Os.* 355C–D [Griffiths, with my emendation])

Here again Plutarch frames his philosophical reading as *the* reverent manner (ὁσίως) of understanding the sacred lore, qualifying such interpretative endeavors as more pleasing to God than even sacrifice or rituals.<sup>101</sup> Plutarch does not dismiss the practice of such sacred rites, even though he once again notes the peril that

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<sup>100</sup> See *ibid.*, 352C (Griffiths): “[T]he true devotee of Isis (Ἰσιακός) is he who, whenever he hears the traditional view of what is displayed and done with regard to these gods, examines and investigates rationally (λόγῳ ζητῶν καὶ φιλοσοφῶν) what truth there may be in it.”

<sup>101</sup> See also, *ibid.*, 352A (Griffiths): “The name of [Isis’s] sanctuary also clearly offers recognition and knowledge (εἶδησιν) [Plutarch has just made an argument about how Isis’s name derives from the Greek word to know εἰδέναι] of what really exists (τοῦ ὄντος); for it is called the Iseion (Ἰσεῖον) to indicate that we shall know what really exists if we approach the sanctuaries of the goddess with reason (λόγου) and reverence (ὁσίως).”

threatens those who misinterpret their meanings.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, in his opening to *On Isis and Osiris*, Plutarch describes the desire for true notions about the gods as a “yearning after divinity” (θειότητος ὄρεξις), a “training and intellectual pursuit” (τὴν μάθησιν καὶ τὴν ζήτησιν) after “sacred lore” (ἱερῶν), that “constitutes a more reverent task than all ceremonial purification and temple service” (ἀγνείας τε πάσης καὶ νεωκορίας ἔργον ὀσιώτερον).<sup>103</sup> According to Plutarch, it is the philosophical reading that truly pleases the divine, whereas ritual performance is only meant to direct our thoughts toward the heavenly principles that structure the cosmos.

Plutarch’s *On Isis and Osiris* is indicative of and participates in a broader philosophical discourse that traded upon the cultural prestige associated with ancient mysteries, while redefining the content and significance of such symbols in ways that legitimated his knowledge of the divine. Plutarch’s reinterpretation of the sacred lore of the Isidian mysteries according to his philosophical principles distinguishes his knowledge of the divine from competing philosophical and other religious experts of this day, including mystagogues. Plutarch is careful to point out that it is not just *any* philosophical reading that will lead you to the truth about the gods—and indeed, there are many other Stoic, Pythagorean, and Platonic allegorizations of the Isis lore available as documented in *On Isis and Osiris*—but it is *his* interpretation that best unveils the Platonic virtues and dualistic cosmology

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<sup>102</sup> See Ullucci, “Contesting the Meaning of Animal Sacrifice,” 57–74.

<sup>103</sup> *Is. Os.* 351E (Griffiths, with my emendation).

hidden in these stories and rites.<sup>104</sup> According to Plutarch, sacred stories and rites are pedagogical, not propitiatory. That is to say, the mythical symbols found in these stories and rites should direct our minds toward a heavenly experience of the divine and the habituation of virtue through contemplation. Plutarch suggests that competing views of the divine are less philosophically rigorous at best, and superstitious or atheistic at worst, but by no means do they constitute true reverence (ὁσιότης) or piety (εὐσέβεια). Thus, in a cultural marketplace of competing theories about how to interpret the divine, Plutarch's appeal to 'reverence' or 'religious correctness' (ὁσιότης) functions to legitimate his knowledge of the divine over against other views stigmatized as atheistic or superstitious.

Like Philo, Plutarch's appropriation of themes from the Isisidian mysteries served a broader apologetic function. As Daniel S. Richter has argued, Plutarch's appropriation of the Isis and Osiris myth was "motivated less by early imperial Egyptomania than by an unwillingness to accept what he saw as the culturally derivative status of Greece that an Egyptian origin of Greek wisdom implies."<sup>105</sup>

Accordingly, Plutarch renegotiates "the traditional, derivative status of Greek cult"

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<sup>104</sup> After detailing many different interpretations of the Isis and Osiris myth, Plutarch states, "it is not unreasonable to say that individually these theorists are wrong, but that collectively they are right"—correct in the sense of recognizing that these myths must be interpreted allegorically (ibid., 45.369A, Griffiths). Plutarch goes on to critique the cosmological theories of Democritus, Epicurus, and the Stoics (ibid., 45.369A–B). The whole structure of Plutarch's *On Osiris and Isis* presents consecutive competing theories about the what sacred lore actually signify about the universe, that are not so much thoroughly refuted by Plutarch, as dismissed and overshadowed by his own reading that has the last word. On the allegorical interpretations of myths by philosophers, see also Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 23–72.

<sup>105</sup> Daniel S. Richter, "Plutarch on Isis and Osiris: Text, Cult, and Cultural Appropriation," *TAPA* 131 (2001): 191–216; 193. See Diodorus Siculus *Bibl. hist.*, 1.69.2–3 for a clear articulation of this traditional view of the priority of Egyptian wisdom.

by showing how Greek allegorical interpretation is necessary to unpack the truth behind the rites and sacred lore of Isis and Osiris, which not inadvertently turn out to be middle-Platonic metaphysics as interpreted from Plato's *Timaeus*.<sup>106</sup> As Richter observes, Plutarch's argument offers the following cultural logic: if the true devotee of Isis (Ἰσιακός) is a philosopher and philosophy belongs to the Greeks, then the Ἰσιακός is "a Hellene imbued with the philosophical training of Greek *paideia*."<sup>107</sup> Plutarch's contention that the provenance of true ancient wisdom is located within Greek *paideia* is well situated within the historical rhetorical situation of the broad cultural phenomenon of the so-called Second Sophistic of the late first- and second-century C.E. Within the Second Sophistic, elite males competed with one another in demonstrating the legitimacy and superiority of their Greek education (*paideia*) as performed in speech, mannerisms, and expertise in classical Greek literary culture in order to garner and validate their cultural distinction and prestige.<sup>108</sup> While Plutarch's deployment of a philosophical rhetoric of piety framed by the Isidian rites and sacred lore does not quite share the serious stakes of Philo's dire historical situation in a hostile Alexandria, both Philo and Plutarch aim to invest more cultural legitimacy into their respective Jewish and Greek ethnic identity

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<sup>106</sup> Richter, "Plutarch on Isis and Osiris," 194.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>108</sup> See such important treatments of this cultural movement as found in, Graham Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993); Tim Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); idem., *The Second Sophistic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Barbara E. Borg, ed., *Paideia: The World of the Second Sophistic* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004); Thomas A. Schmitz, "Plutarch and the Second Sophistic," in *A Companion to Plutarch*, ed. Mark Beck (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2014), 32–42.

markers (e.g., Torah and *paideia*) through the appropriation of terminology and sacred lore of mysteries.

When read alongside Philo, Plutarch's characterization of his Platonic theology as reverent, grounded in the ancient wisdom preserved in the sacred lore of mysteries, and discernable through philosophical reasoning provides further evidence of a discourse that sought to legitimate competing claims about the divine though rhetorically framing such notions in terms of piety and references to the mysteries.

## CONCLUSION

The adoption of mystery terminology to depict philosophical notions and practices was a recognizable tactic of legitimation deployed by philosophers like Plato and Philo—and as I will soon argue, the Pastoral Epistles. Plutarch, as we saw, even goes so far as to locate his philosophical knowledge about the divine within the cloaked symbolism of the sacred lore of Isis and Osiris. I have argued that for Philo and Plutarch, the rhetorical representation of their knowledge of the divine as supplying either the proper content or meaning of the mysteries capitalized upon the perceived and evidently enduring cultural value ascribed to ancient mysteries. In this way, both Philo and Plutarch rhetorically encroach upon the expertise held by mystagogues, cult attendants, and local priests, implicitly undermining the cultural prestige ascribed to such religious experts, while enhancing the value of their expertise. This strategy was complemented by each philosopher's

representation of his insights as the “purely pious” or “truly reverent” interpretation of divine.

Both Philo’s and Plutarch’s appeals to piety helped not only to distinguish their philosophical readings from what each denigrated as the superstitions of the masses and the sophists who pandered to them, but also supplied a form of cultural legitimacy to their views. As we have seen throughout this dissertation, piety was perceived to hold a positive valence among Philo and Plutarch’s audiences, broadly signifying that which is in compliance with the divine. Representing one’s philosophic understanding as pious or reverent implied not only that other beliefs were either false or incomplete, but that one’s own true knowledge of the divine could properly secure the divine favor and benefits that accompanied such expertise. Such expertise also secured honor, prestige, and respect, which in Philo’s case, could be translated into acceptance or tolerance, within ancient Mediterranean culture. As I explained above, the virtue of piety possessed potent signification for philosophers as evidenced by the lengths to which philosophers sought to (re)define and claim this virtue through treatises written on and around this topic. Many philosophers like Plato, Philodemus, and Philo found themselves in an apologetic posture of defending the piety of their philosophical notions of the divine. For these philosophers, piety could only be achieved through possessing a correct understanding of the meanings of rituals and the nature of the divine. At stake in their rhetorical situation was the viability of their intellectual positions before fellow adherents and outsiders. As the infamous case of Socrates made clear for many, even one’s livelihood or life itself was at stake.

In the next chapter we will proceed to explore how some aspects of the Pastorals' rhetorical deployment of piety become illuminated when read in terms of this philosophical discursive complex. When we read 1 Timothy 3:16 as participating in Greek philosophical discourse on piety, we can gain a richer and more complex appreciation for the rhetorical and socio-political aims of calling the manifestation of the Christ a "mystery of piety."



## Chapter Six

### *The Mystery of Pastoral Piety: The Pastoral Epistles' Appeal to Piety among Competing Religious Experts*

How we interpret the rhetorical aims and effects of the author of 1 Timothy's description of the *ekklēsia*'s truth as the "mystery of piety" (1 Tim. 3:16) depends upon the kinds of cultural meanings that we imagine were activated by appeals to "mystery" and "piety" for ancient audiences. As I have discussed in the introduction and chapter 5, scholars writing on the Pastorals have generally sought to determine the meaning and significance of such terms by attending to how they appear within the context of the Pastoral Epistles and, more broadly, the New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism. Often, this methodology has been utilized to emphasize the distinctive Judeo-Christian meaning that such terms acquired once appropriated by biblical authors in contrast to their pagan or secular signification. This is especially true for μυστήριον.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, "the mystery of piety" has been explained as signifying a belief and practice that conforms to the Christological revelation celebrated within the hymn. This interpretation fails to appreciate the broader socio-political implications of claiming to possess a "mystery" within 1 Timothy's cultural milieu.

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<sup>1</sup> For an enlightening examination on the theological commitments latent among biblical scholars' drive to differentiate Christianity from the so-called "mystery religions," see Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); see especially his chapter, "On Comparing Words," 54–84. See also, D. H. Wiens, "Mystery Concepts in Primitive Christianity and its Environment," *ANRW* 23.2 (1980): 1248–84.

I suggest that the discourses of piety and mysteries operative among philosophers, as exemplified by Philo and Plutarch, illuminate the possible socio-political aims and effects of the author of 1 Timothy's use of piety and mystery terminology. As I will discuss below, scholars who have recognized the relevance of Greek philosophical and Jewish literature for understanding the author's use of εὐσέβεια have observed how such texts define true εὐσέβεια as dependent upon a correct knowledge of the divine. I go further by attending to the socio-political function of piety in philosophical literature and to how this rhetoric of piety intersects with a philosophical trope that described the practice of philosophy as a true initiation into the mysteries. As we observed in Plutarch, mysteries were regarded as repositories of ancient wisdom and so had accrued cultural prestige. As we saw, by appealing to the mysteries, Philo and Plutarch legitimated their expertise in matters concerning knowledge about the divine as well as showed themselves to be superior to other religious experts.

This chapter will analyze 1 Timothy's constellation of piety, mystery terminology, and knowledge about the divine in order to provide a more robust reading of the social and political implications of the author of 1 Timothy's description of Christ's earthly manifestation and heavenly ascension as a "mystery of piety." I contend that the author's rhetoric of piety and mystery aimed to affirm his audiences' confidence in the cultural legitimacy of their faith in Christ as well as to distinguish the author's expertise as superior to that of his inscribed opponents and quite possibly other religious experts, including mystagogues as well as local cult attendants and priests.

## SCHOLARSHIP ON PIETY AND PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE

In their determination of the meaning of εὐσέβεια in the Pastoral Epistles, commentators have come to the consensus that the philosophical discourse on piety, as mediated through Hellenistic Jewish literature, provides an essential background for understanding the Pastoral Epistles' definition of piety as entailing a correct knowledge of the divine.<sup>2</sup> For example, both Ceslas Spicq and Hermann von Lips regard the Greek philosophical definition of εὐσέβεια as the knowledge about how to serve the gods (ἐπιστήμη θεῶν θεραπέας) as relevant for understanding the Pastoral Epistles' association of εὐσέβεια with correct teaching (ὕγιαίνοντες λόγοι, 1 Tim. 6:3) and true knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις ἀληθείας, Titus 1:1; see also 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Tim. 3:7).<sup>3</sup> However, their treatment of εὐσέβεια in Greek philosophy is largely confined to references listed in the footnotes.<sup>4</sup> According to Spicq, the author of the Pastorals was influenced by the Septuagint's depiction of the pious as possessing wisdom (e.g. Isa. 32:8; Sir. 27:11; 43:33; Prov. 1:7).<sup>5</sup> Jerome Quinn suggests that the author's description of the "knowledge of the truth in accordance with piety"

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<sup>2</sup> The connection between piety and knowledge or doctrine was not lost upon Werner Foerster, who suggested that the term was deployed to counter claims of "an ecstatic Gnosticizing movement in the churches" (*TDNT* 7:183). However, Foerster did not suggest that there exists any significant relationship between the Pastoral Epistles and the philosophical or Jewish deployment of piety that he had introduced prior (pp. 171–181).

<sup>3</sup> See Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.487–88; von Lips, *Glaube, Gemeinde, Amt*, 76–87.

<sup>4</sup> Spicq (*Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.487 n.4) cites the following references as evidence for piety being defined as a knowledge (ἐπιστήμη): Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 7.119; Philo, *Mut.* 76; 4 Macc. 11:21; *Corp. herm.* 6.5; 10.9; Cicero, *Nat. d.* 2.153. To these, von Lips (*Glaube, Gemeinde, Amt*, 82 n.195) adds: Sextus Empiricus, *Math.* 9.123; cf. Plutarch, *Aem.* 3.3; Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2.68. See also Foerster, *TDNT* 7:175–78.

<sup>5</sup> Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.487. For the presence of εὐσέβεια in Hellenistic Jewish literature, see the introduction and Ch. 5.

(ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας τῆς κατ' εὐσέβειαν) in Titus 1:1 recalls Isaiah 11:2's pairing together of "a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord" (rendered in the Septuagint's Greek, πνεῦμα γνώσεως καὶ εὐσεβείας).<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Ben Witherington III posits that this passage is indicative of the author's cognizance of "the Gentile use" of piety as either constitutive or productive of "the knowledge of the gods" (*cognitionem deorum*; e.g., Cicero, *Nat. d.* 2.153).<sup>7</sup>

A general consensus has also emerged around the aims to which 1 Timothy 3:16, along with the entire Pastoral Corpus, used terminology familiar to the philosophical moral tradition. According to Quinn, εὐσέβεια offered "a common ground" and "a means for explaining and expressing [oneself] to contemporary society" for both Hellenistic Jews and the Pastoral Epistles.<sup>8</sup> Witherington adds that the Pastoral Epistles' call for εὐσέβεια "reflects a tenuous social situation for Christians" and "is part of the social program underlying these letters to promote respect for those 'traditional' values in regard to the social order...that Christians could endorse."<sup>9</sup> For most commentaries, analysis into the rhetorical significance and function of piety in 1 Timothy 3:16 concludes once they have shown how Christian εὐσέβεια signified both knowledge and practice and furthered the

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<sup>6</sup> Quinn, *Titus*, 285.

<sup>7</sup> Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 101. Witherington, like Quinn (*Letter to Titus*, 287), turns to A. D. Nock for his brief treatment of the Greek philosophical background for which the knowledge of God "is or produces piety;" see *Conversion: The Old and New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 119–121, quote on 119.

<sup>8</sup> Quinn, *Titus*, 287–88, so also Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 144.

<sup>9</sup> Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 100.

missionary endeavors of the epistles, functioning as a point of contact between Christian values and Greco-Roman culture. While there is much to affirm about Quinn's and Witherington's assessments, there remains more to consider regarding the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety and its polemical aims as informed by ancient philosophy. In the following section, I will argue that the strategic deployment of piety and mystery terminology among philosophers, who sought to portray themselves as possessing the same, if not superior expertise in ancient wisdom associated with mystagogues illuminates the social and political aims of 1 Timothy 3:16.

#### THE RHETORIC OF "THE MYSTERY OF PIETY" (1 TIM. 3:16)

Let us now turn our attention to interpreting 1 Timothy 3:16 within its immediate literary context before considering what rhetorical work piety and mystery terminology accomplishes for the author. As William Mounce has observed, 1 Timothy 3:14–16 provides the central perspective from which the epistle's paraenetic instructions find their animation.<sup>10</sup> The passage reads:

Ταῦτά σοι γράφω ἐλπίζων ἐλθεῖν πρὸς σὲ ἐν τάχει. ἐὰν δὲ βραδύνω, ἵνα εἰδῇς πῶς δεῖ ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ ἀναστρέφεσθαι, ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐκκλησία θεοῦ

<sup>10</sup> Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 214; see also Ch. 5. The instructions of the Pastoral Epistles are rightly classified as paraenesis to the extent that they represent a form of moral exhortation to continue in a particular way of life over against an inferior way. Paraenesis was popular among moral philosophers and fell within the broader rhetorical category of protreptic. Paraenesis does not so much instruct new information or argue for its point of view as it does serve to remind its audience to put into practice what they already know. See Stanley Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, ed. Wayne A. Meeks (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 92; Abraham Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Source Book*, LEC (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 124–25; Jerome Quinn, "Paraenesis and the Pastoral Epistles: Lexical Observations Bearing on the Nature of the Sub-genre and Soundings in Its Role in Socialization and Liturgies," *Semeia* 50 (1990): 189–210. Cf. Witherington's argument for reading the Pastorals in light of Aristotle's demonstrative rhetoric (*Rhet* 1356A20–33; 1359B8–12), *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 90–96.

ζῶντος, στῦλος καὶ ἐδραῖωμα τῆς ἀληθείας. καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν  
τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον.

ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί,  
ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι,  
ὥφθη ἀγγέλοις,  
ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν,  
ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ,  
ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ.

I hope to come to you shortly, but I write these things to you so that, if am delayed, you may know how one ought to conduct oneself in the household of God, which is the *ekklēsia* of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. And most certainly, great is the mystery of piety (μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον):

He was revealed in flesh,  
vindicated in spirit,  
seen by angels,  
proclaimed among nations,  
believed in the world,  
taken up in glory.

Positioned between the author's descriptions of ideal leaders (1 Tim. 3:1–13) and threatening false teachers (1 Tim 4:1–5), “the mystery of piety” orients the character and behavior of the true *ekklēsia*. In 1 Tim 3:14–15, the absent “Paul” makes clear that the purpose of his writing is to compensate for his delayed presence and to instruct the *ekklēsia* “how it is necessary to behave in the household of God, which is the *ekklēsia* of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth” (πῶς δεῖ ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ ἀναστέφεσθαι ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζῶντος, στῦλος καὶ ἐδραῖωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, 1 Tim. 3:15). This behavior concerns the preceding guidelines on prayer (1 Tim 2:1–8), the dress and subordination of women (1 Tim 2:9–15), and the eligibility and expected character of bishops and deacons (1 Tim 3:1–13). As I discussed in chapter 2, such admonitions are indicative of the author's negotiation of elite discourse that stigmatized Christians as subversive practitioners

of a foreign superstition and a potential threat to ancestral customs. Through these instructions, the author aims to shape his audience, consisting of lay and office-holding members, into subjects fit to embody respectable societal values and, by doing so, to disrupt suspicion and even persecution directed toward them among outsiders. As I argued in chapter 4, the Pastorals perceived this ideal way of life as under threat by false teachers and, potentially, by wealthy patrons and patronesses, who financially supported such teachers and may have even presumed that their status and patronage of the *ekklēsia* authorized them to teach (1 Tim. 2:11–14).

Directly following the Christological summary, which 1 Timothy 3:16 introduces as “the mystery of piety,” 1 Timothy 4:1–5 recalls the Spirit’s ominous warning about the apostasy to occur in the eschatological “latter days” (ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς) which is presumably occurring in the present of the pseudepigraphal author. The inscribed opponents are described as liars who have seared their own consciousness (ψευδολόγων κεκαυστηριασμένων τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν), practice an excessive abstinence from marriage and particular foods, and will lead many to renounce the faith through demonically inspired teachings. Further on, the author admonishes his audience against having anything to do with “irreverent and old-wives’ tales” (βεβήλους καὶ γραώδεις μύθους), but to instead, “train yourself in piety” (Γύμαζε δὲ σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν, 1 Tim 4:7). With this admonition, the author proffers an alternative training regimen for attaining piety to compete with the ascetic practices promoted by the inscribed apostates. Training that is truly productive of piety comprises an understanding of “the words of the faith and of the noble teaching” (τοῖς λόγοις τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς καλῆς διδασκαλίας, 1 Tim 4:6). As

I touched upon in chapter 4 and will further detail below, the contrasts which are drawn here between a knowledge of Christ which is productive of piety and the vulgar myths that comprise the teaching of the inscribed opponents form a larger polemic of the author. The author's denigration of his opponents as lacking true piety (e.g. 2 Tim. 3:5) functions to delegitimize any moral or theological instruction that contrasts with the behavior and teachings endorsed by the Pastoral Epistles. This rhetoric of piety, I suggest, may have been aimed at denigrating the status of particular insiders, who were rival teachers of the author, their adherents, and patrons by labeling them outsiders. And so at the rhetorical summit of the epistle at 1 Timothy 3:16, which overlooks the behavior and knowledge befitting the household of God, the author plants his flag, unfurling the mystery of piety for the world to see. The audacity of the author's claim is made all the more vibrant when read in light of the philosophical discourse on piety.

How then might the author of 1 Timothy's appeal to "the mystery of piety" contribute to his negotiation of the socio-political situation, building solidarity within, while differentiating insiders from outsiders? I suggest that the author's description of the Christological summary as a "mystery of piety" evoked a widespread philosophical trope that depicted the philosophical way of life and knowledge as equivalent to the sacred rites and lore of mysteries, as evidenced in Plato (e.g. *Phaed.* 69C–D) and Philo (e.g. *Cher.* 42). This trope functioned to represent the Pastorals' knowledge of the divine as commensurate with the cultural prestige and deep insight that was associated with the ancient wisdom associated with the mysteries. By representing its knowledge of the divine as a mystery



productive of piety, 1 Timothy claims that the *ekklēsia* lacks for nothing in terms of practices that secured divine benefaction and of insight into the nature of the cosmos and virtue—the same “cultural goods” that were popularly perceived to fall under the expertise of mystagogues and philosophers. And so, this increase in the cultural cachet of the *ekklēsia* would have proved useful to the author’s social and political aims of encouraging the confidence of insiders in the legitimacy of their faith and practice and rhetorically distinguishing the superiority of its true piety from the corrupt belief and practices of rival teachers.

When we broaden our analytical optics to include a wider range of cultural discourses that could be invoked in the Pastorals’ claim to possess “the mystery of piety,” new horizons of possible rhetorical effects come into view. In particular, as I will discuss below, the author of 1 Timothy’s employment of this philosophical trope would have had the cumulative effect of adding legitimacy to the Pastorals’ moral and theological instructions by showing the inscribed author to speak as one with a philosophical pedigree. Other possible effects of this rhetoric of piety come into purview when we read 1 Timothy 3:16 alongside of claims to piety made by local priests and cult officiates of the mysteries of Artemis of Ephesus as evidenced by inscriptions. As I will demonstrate, the author’s social and political aims of building solidarity and delineating insiders from outsiders would have been buttressed by these possible rhetorical effects.

## THE PASTORALS' PAUL AMONG THE PHILOSOPHERS

The parallels that exist between the language and rhetoric of the Pastoral Epistles and contemporaneous philosophical literature have been well documented in the philologically astute studies of Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, Ceslas Spicq, Abraham Malherbe, Benjamin Fiore, and Stephen Mott. In what follows, I will provide a brief account of some of the more noteworthy similarities between the Pastoral Epistles and philosophical literature in order to demonstrate the thematic tendency of the Pastoral Epistles to deploy terminology and conceptions familiar to contemporaneous philosophical discourse. I contend that the author of 1 Timothy presents Christian theology and morality in terms appropriated from the discursive register of ancient philosophy that capitalized upon the cultural prestige that audiences ascribed to philosophers and their expertise in the nature of the divine and moral psychagogy. The effect of this tactic is to legitimate the inscribed author's voice as an authoritative teacher on matters of divine knowledge over against other competing teachers. This use of philosophical terminology and concepts, I argue, not only serves to distinguish sound instruction from the denigrated false piety and instruction of the inscribed opponents, but also undergirds the confident witness of the *ekklēsia* in its articulation of the faith to the outside world.

### Medical Imagery Associated with Philosophical Psychagogy

Noteworthy among much of the terminology distinct to the Pastoral Epistles and absent from the undisputed Pauline epistles is the thematic use of medical imagery to contrast the “healthiness” and “soundness” (ὕγιαίνω, ὑγιής) of correct

instruction over against the diseased contamination belonging to the opponents.<sup>11</sup> The heterodox teachers are described as not agreeing with the “sound words (ὕγιαίνουσιν λόγοις) of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim 6:3), to which the *ekklēsia* should hold fast as they received it from Paul (2 Tim 1:13).<sup>12</sup> Consequently, the opponents have seared their conscience (κεκαυστηριασμένων τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν) (1 Tim 4:2),<sup>13</sup> become corrupt in mind (διεφθαρμένων... τὸν νοῦν) (1 Tim 6:4), and ensnared by “many senseless and harmful desires” (ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ἀνοήτους καὶ βλαβεράς) (1 Tim 6:9). Abraham Malherbe has demonstrated that the depiction of the philosopher as a physician of the soul, who could treat humanity’s sickness of vice and addiction to desires and pleasures through his sound teaching, was a common trope in philosophical literature.<sup>14</sup> Philo describes the soul as a battlefield where passions (πάθοι) and diseases (νοσήματα) war against sound reason (ὕγιαίνοντο λόγοι).<sup>15</sup> Dio Chrysostom similarly describes the soul consumed by vices, which include ignorance (ἄγνοια), wickedness (πονηρία), jealousy

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<sup>11</sup> “Sound teaching (διδασκαλία)” (1 Tim 1:10; 2 Tim 4:3; Tit 1:9; 2:1); “sound words (λόγοι)” (1 Tim 6:3; 2 Tim 1:13; Tit 2:8); and “sound in the faith (ἐν τῇ πίστει)” (Tit 1:13; 2:2).

<sup>12</sup> The participle of ὕγιαίνω and adjective ὑγιής modify “words/reason” (λογοί) in 1 Tim 6:3; 2 Tim 1:13; Tit 2:8; and “teaching” (διδασκαλία) in 1 Tim 1:10; 2 Tim 4:3; Tit 1:9; 2:1; and “in the faith” (ἐν τῇ πίστει) in Tit 1:13.

<sup>13</sup> The idea of vice leaving scares or searing upon one’s conscience or psychic self/soul can also be found in Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* 65C–D; Lucian, *Cat.* 24.

<sup>14</sup> Abraham Malherbe, “Medical Imagery in the Pastoral Epistles,” in his *Paul and the Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989) 121–37; originally printed in *Texts and Testaments: Critical Essays on the Bible and Early Church Fathers: A Volume in Honor of Stuart Currie*, ed. W. Eugene March (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 1980), 19–35; see esp., Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

<sup>15</sup> Philo, *Abr.* 223; see also *Det.* 110.

(φθόνος), and desires (ἐπιθυμία), as “a corrupt and diseased body” (διεφθαρμένου σώματος καὶ νοσοῦντος) (*Orat.* 78.45; cf. 1 Tim 6:4). In contrast, the ideal philosopher is sound in both words and deeds (ὕγιης μὲν ἐν λόγοις ὕγιης δὲ ἐν ἔργοις) (*Orat.* 78.39). It is the expertise of the philosopher to remedy the malady of vice through psychagogic treatment, administering education and reason with precision and adaptability to the soul inflamed by passions.<sup>16</sup> These themes were especially present among Stoic and Cynic philosophers, including Seneca,<sup>17</sup> Musonius,<sup>18</sup> and Epictetus,<sup>19</sup> and the second-century C.E. Cynic pseudepigrapher of the *Epistles of Diogenes*.<sup>20</sup> Given the widespread polemical use of this trope common among philosophical circles, it is likely that it would have been recognizable to the *Pastoral Epistles'* ancient audience. Malherbe concludes that such philosophical polemic served to further denigrate the corrupted character of the opponents, for whom there was no hope of a psychagogic treatment to avail them of their sick minds.<sup>21</sup> Conversely, the inscribed author is indirectly

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<sup>16</sup> On psychagogy, see Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophical Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 81–87; Clarence E. Glad, *Paul and Philodemus: Adaptability in Epicureanism and Early Christian Psychagogy*, NovTSup 81 (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> Seneca, *Ep.* 22.1; 27.1; 40.5; 50.4; 64.8; 72.5–6; 94.24; 95.29.

<sup>18</sup> Musonius, *Frag.* 1.

<sup>19</sup> Epictetus, *Diatr.* 2.15.4–5; 3.21.20; 3.23.27–28, 30; 3.25.7–8.

<sup>20</sup> Pseudo-Diogenes, *Ep.* 28; for more on these references, see Malherbe, “Medical Images,” 127–32.

<sup>21</sup> Malherbe, “Godliness, Self-Sufficiency,” 376–405, esp. 391.

represented as the philosophical physician “concerned with personal moral progress,” who “promotes social stability.”<sup>22</sup>

### **Stereotypical Invective against Sophists**

With respect to the construction of the opponents in the Pastoral Epistles, biblical commentators as early as Martin Dibelius and Ceslas Spicq have observed the way in which the author rehearses a typical “philosophical critique against sophists” in his polemical construction of “the heretical Other” that functions to defame and discredit his opponents’ teachings and character.<sup>23</sup> A comprehensive and compelling analysis of this theme was later developed within the 1971 Harvard dissertation of Robert J. Karris.<sup>24</sup> Orators and writers ranging from Plato to Philo and Dio Chrysostom often disparaged wandering orators and competing teachers as ‘sophists’<sup>25</sup> who, from their base motivation of greed,<sup>26</sup> profited from deceptively

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<sup>22</sup> Malherbe, “Medical Images,” 132.

<sup>23</sup> See Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 83; see also Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.86–88, 634.

<sup>24</sup> See Karris, “Function and *Sitz im Leben*”; also, “Background and Significance.” For a robust treatment of the history and development of this discourse, see “Function and *Sitz im Leben*,” 1–44, esp. his comparative chart on pp. 21, 44.

<sup>25</sup> During the period of the Second Sophistic (about 70 C.E. and onwards to the early third century C.E.), the term ‘sophist’ and its derivatives signified a range of positive and negative connotations. Sophists were both celebrated by their fans and derided by their intellectual competitors, often by those who represented themselves as philosophers (e.g., Epictetus, Dio Chrysostom, Plutarch) for their trained elegance in oration and rhetoric. However, the classification of an individual as a sophist (σοφιστής) over against a rhetorician (ρήτωρ) or philosopher (φιλόσοφος) changed over time and blurred as philosophers were not without rhetorical elegance nor sophists without some philosophical leanings. Indicative of this blurring are the inclusion of Dio Chrysostom and Favorinus (with some qualifications) within Philostratus’ *Lives of the Sophists*. See Bowerstock, *Greek Sophists*, 10–14; Greg R. Stanton, “Sophists and Philosophers: Problems of Classification,” *The American Journal of Philology* 94 (1973): 350–364; esp. 350–357.

<sup>26</sup> That sophists are greedy for profits is a common accusation leveled against them, ranging from Plato to Tatian, including: Plato, *Soph.* 223A, 233B; Isocrates, *Hel. enc.* 10.6; 13.4; Xenophon, *Cyn.* 13.8–9; Aristotle, *Soph. elench.* 165A; Tatian, *Ad. graec.* 25. For a more complete list, see Karris “Background and Significance,” 552 n. 12; and especially “Function and *Sitz im Leben*,” 45–46 for

peddling tenuous wisdom ornamented with vacuous rhetorical flourish. Sophists were typified as hypocritical teachers who engaged in complex disputes and preyed upon uneducated women and children.<sup>27</sup> The author of the Pastoral Epistles evokes these aspects of the philosophical trope of the sophist when he represents rival teachers as instructing about piety for the sole sake of profit (1 Tim. 6:5), possessed by a “sick craving for controversy and disputing over words” (νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις καὶ λογομαχίας) (1 Tim 6:4), and “captivating silly women” (αἰχμαλωτίζοντες γυναῖκάρια, 2 Tim. 3:6).

How Philo criticizes hypocritical sophists whose actions are inconsistent with their teachings in *That the Worse Attacks the Better* provides a useful analogue for thinking about the Pastorals' deployment of virtues and vices in conjunction with this philosophical polemical trope:

But it is the nature of sophists to have for enemies the faculties which are in them, while their language is at variance with their thoughts and their thoughts with their language, and while neither is in the least degree consistent with the other. At all events, they wear out our ears, arguing that justice is to be shared in common (τὴν δικαιοσύνη κοινωνικόν), that moderation is profitable (τὴν σωφροσύνην συμφέρον), that self-control is urbane (τὴν ἐγκράτειαν ἀστεῖον), that piety is most useful (τὴν εὐσέβεια ὠφελιμώτατον), and, of each other virtue, that it is most sound (ὀγιεινότατον) and saving (σωτήριον)...And, nevertheless, they never cease showing by their conduct that their real opinion is the reverse of their language...they then show that they are, above all measure, foolish

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Karris's chart comparing the stereotypical polemic against sophists and wandering philosophers concerning their greed and the language of 1 Tim 6:5 and Titus 1:11.

<sup>27</sup> See Karris “Background and Significance,” 552–555; “Function and *Sitz im Leben*,” 3–5. The common charge of hypocrisy dates back to fifth and fourth centuries C.E. as demonstrated in the Greek rhetorician Isocrates's oration, *Soph.* 13.5. On the charge of complex disputes and quibbling over words, see Isocrates, *Hel. enc.* 10.4–5; Xenophon, *Cyn.* 13.6; Plato, *Resp.* 6.496A. On bewitching the youth, see Plato, *Soph.* 234C; Aristophanes, *Nub.* 1111–1112; and women, Seneca, *Ep.* 29; Lucian, *Rhet. praec.* 23; *Fug.* 17–18.

(ἀφραΐνοντες), and immoderate (ἀκολασταΐνοντες), and unjust (ἀδικοῦντες), and impious (ἀσεβοῦντες); in short, that they are throwing into confusion and overturning all divine and human regulations and principles (ἀνθρώπεια καὶ θεΐα συγγέοντες τε καὶ ἀνατρέποντες).<sup>28</sup>

Philo's stereotypical sophists, whose claims to wisdom about the nature of virtue are betrayed by their vices, are similar to the false teachers of 1 Timothy whose pretensions to piety (1 Tim. 6:5) are undercut by their pride and the fact that their teachings produce "envy, dissension, and blasphemies, and base suspicions (φθόνος ἔρις βλασφημίαι ὑπόνοιαι πονηραί)" (1 Tim 6:4). Both the teachings of Philo's sophists and 1 Timothy's false teachers threaten to disrupt the harmony of divinely established social order. It is also of note that both Philo's sophists and 1 Timothy 4:8 acknowledge that piety is useful (ὠφέλιμος),<sup>29</sup> which suggests that this thesis may have been a conventional philosophical topic.<sup>30</sup> And so the inscribed sophistic opponents whose piety is all talk and no power (2 Tim. 3:5) served as a foil for Philo's and the author of the Pastorals' aims to demonstrate the consistency and superiority of their piety.

For Philo and the Pastoral Epistles, this rhetorical summoning and defamation of the "sophists" functions as a generic effigy for any theological position antithetical to their instruction. Of course, the sophistic caricature does not

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<sup>28</sup> Philo, *Det.* 72–73 (Yonge, with my own modifications).

<sup>29</sup> Cp. Philo's use of the superlative (τὴν εὐσέβεια ὠφελιμώτατον) with the inclusion of a preposition phrase in 1 Tim. 4:8 (ἡ δὲ εὐσέβεια πρὸς πάντα ὠφέλιμος ἐστίν).

<sup>30</sup> See also Philo's description of the Hebrews as being taught in the "most beautiful and useful of all lessons, namely, piety" (μαθημάτων τὸ κάλλιστον καὶ ὠφελιμώτατον ἀναδιδασκομένους) (*Mos.* 1.146).

completely map onto the Pastoral Epistles' construction of the opposition.<sup>31</sup> Distinct from this trope are the charges that the inscribed opponents of 1 Timothy are obsessed with "myths and endless genealogies" (1 Tim 1:4; 1 Tim 4:7; cf. 2 Tim 4:4), aspire to be "teachers of the law" (1 Tim 1:7), and abstain from marriage and certain foods (1 Tim 4:3). 2 Timothy's inscribed opponents teach that resurrection has already occurred (2 Tim 2:18), while in Titus, the inscribed opponents are associated with "the circumcision sect" (οἱ ἐκ τῆς περιτομῆς) (Titus 1:10) and attend to "Jewish myths" (Ἰουδαϊκοῖς μύθοις; Titus 1:14). Whatever this may or may not suggest about the *identity* of the opponents that comprised the historical-rhetorical situation of the Pastorals,<sup>32</sup> the mere association of the inscribed

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<sup>31</sup> According to Karris ("Background and Significance," 556), the use of this sophist-schema had a three-fold function: "The schema is intended to cause aversion for the sophists and sympathy for the writer's position in the minds of his readers. Those authors also employed the schema to dissociate their teaching from that of the sophists, lest the audience confuse their teaching with that of the sophists...Perhaps the most significant function of the schema was to demonstrate who had the right to and actually did impart genuine wisdom and truth."

<sup>32</sup> Karris has argued that the recognition that the Pastoral Epistles employ "stock images" of the sophists enables us to apply form and redaction criticism to the Pastorals' construction of its opponents—the results of which show the opponents to be law-abiding Jewish Christians ("Background and Significance," 562–63). Given that the accumulation of pejorative characteristics do not match any known early Christian sect with precision, I am even suspicious about accepting the Pastorals' description of its opponents as "teachers of the law" (1 Tim 1:7) and those from "the circumcision sect" (Titus 1:10) as descriptions of the actual opponents, which many modern commentators take as some of the most sure identity markers of these opponents (see Lloyd Pietersen, *The Polemic of the Pastorals: A Sociological Examination of the Development of Pauline Christianity* [London: T&T Clark, 2004], 134; Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 346; Fiore, *Pastoral Epistles*, 14–15). As a pseudepigrapher attempting to establish a credible historical setting for his epistle, I would expect the pseudepigrapher to characterize the inscribed false teachers with labels taken from traditional opponents of the burgeoning *ekklēsia*, which include "teachers of the law" (e.g., Luke 5:17, Acts 5:34) and "those from the circumcision" (e.g., Acts 10:45; 11:2; Rom 4:12; Gal 2:12). Given the author's tactical turn to philosophical tropes and terminology in order to legitimate his position and denigrate that of others, I suspect that the actual opponents were proposing their own philosophical, if potentially allegorical, interpretations of Mosaic texts, which the author, for whatever reason, refused to directly address. Such an imaginative reconstruction might explain the prevasiveness of philosophical terminology and tropes that the Pastorals deploys. Rather than directly address the arguments of rival teachers, whom the pseudepigrapher may have perceived to be more philosophically sophisticated than himself, the author appropriates the authoritative voice of Paul and labels these philosophical rivals as negative



opponents with such caricatures strives to undercut any legitimacy the author's audiences might attribute to anyone who "teaches otherwise" (1 Tim. 1:3; 6:3). Overall, it is important to note that here, too, we find the author of the Pastoral Epistles appropriating philosophical tropes in order to denigrate his inscribed opponents and assume the cultural prestige and expertise associated with the ability to deploy philosophic terminology and knowledge.

### **The So-Called Cardinal Virtues of Philosophy**

In contrast to the sophistic vices associated with the opposing teachers, the author of the Pastoral Epistles exhorts his audience to adopt a number of virtues esteemed and discussed among philosophers, including those associated with the so-called cardinal virtues. As Walter T. Wilson documents, while a somewhat loose series of four or five cardinal virtues can be identified in writings as early as the classical poets Pindar and Aeschylus, it is with Plato that this set becomes more defined and established.<sup>33</sup> In Book 4 of the *Republic*, Plato describes the virtues of justice (δικαιοσύνη), moderation (σωφροσύνη), courage (ἀνδρεία), and prudence (φρόνησις) as necessary for citizens to embody in order to serve and preserve the body politic.<sup>34</sup> This set of virtues was by no means stable, with piety (εὐσέβεια) or

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Jewish characters from the past. And so, the present *ekklēsia* can be confident that these opponents have been soundly defeated by Paul and that such rival instruction lacks all legitimacy.

<sup>33</sup> See Pindar, *Isthm.* 8.24–28; Aeschylus, *Sept.* 610 (which includes εὐσεβής); cf. Euripides, frg. 282.23–28; Aeschines, *Ctes.* 168; Walter T. Wilson, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 24; and his chapter length treatment of the topic, "The Canon of Cardinal Virtues in Antiquity," in *The Mysteries of Righteousness: The Literary Composition and Genre of the Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 42–59.

<sup>34</sup> Plato, *Resp.* 433A–B; see also 427E, 433D, 435B. Prudence, courage, and moderation, Wilson instructs (*Pseudo-Phocylides*, 24), represent virtues that correspond to the rational, spirited, and

‘religious correctness’ (ὁσιότης) sometimes being added as a fifth virtue or substituted for one of the four.<sup>35</sup> Among the philosophical schools, the Stoics of the Hellenistic age most extensively analyzed and discussed this loose list of virtues, subdividing these four principal virtues further in order to clarify for students the precise moral duties required for the fulfillment of a virtuous life, while at the same time, arguing for the unity or interconnectedness of all virtues.<sup>36</sup> This philosophical trope was also adopted in Hellenistic Jewish literature, including the *Wisdom of Solomon*, 4 Maccabees, Ben Sira, and especially Pseudo-Phocylides.<sup>37</sup> Within Greek and Roman epideictic oratory, the canon of virtues became an organizing principle for encomia of great men and kings.<sup>38</sup> Contemporaneous with the Pastoral Epistles,

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appetitive faculties of the soul, respectively; while justice, assisted by moderation, maintains balance within the tripartite soul. Other virtues often incorporated as substitutions, include ἐγκράτεια (self-control) and κατερία (fortitude).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 25. See Plato, *Lach.* 199D (ὁσιότης); *Prot.* 349B (ὁσιότης); *Gorg.* 507C (ὁσιος) Xenophon, *Mem.* 4.6.1–12 (εὐσέβεια); 4.8.11 (εὐσεβής, describing the character of Socrates!), *Ages.* 3.1–5 (εὐσέβεια); Isocrates, *De pace* 63 (εὐσέβεια); Philo, *Det.* 18 (εὐσέβεια); *Mut.* 197 (ὁσιος); *Mos.* 2.216 (εὐσέβεια, ὁσιος); *Praem.* 160 (ὁσιότης, εὐσέβεια).

<sup>36</sup> See *SVF* 1.201, 374, 563; 3.95, 255, 256, 262–6, 275, 280; see also Cicero’s *De Officiis*, which relies heavily upon the ethical theory of the Stoic Panaetius of Rhodes; Wilson, *Mysteries*, 45–47. Helen North, “Canons and Hierarchies of the Cardinal Virtues in Greek and Latin Literature,” in *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honor of Harry Caplan*, ed. Luitpold Wallach, CSCP 35 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 165–183. Later philosophers continuing this trend include, Cicero, *Inv.* 2.159–165; Plutarch, *Stoic. rep.* 1034CD; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 7.92–93, 126.

<sup>37</sup> Wis 8.7; 4 Macc 1.1–4; Sir 36.23–38.23; Ps.-Phoc 9–131; see Wilson, *Mysteries*, 55–56, 75–118.

<sup>38</sup> Wilson, *Mysteries*, 47–48. The incorporation of the cardinal virtues into epideictic speech as an organizing device was recommended by Aristotle in his *Ars Rhetorica* 1.9.5; cf. pseudo-Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.2.3–3.3.6, 3.6.10; Cicero, *Inv.* 2.53.159–2.54.165 which deploy the Platonic, and perhaps more common list of four virtues as opposed to Aristotle’s more expansive list. See also D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 76–95.

the Stoic Musonius Rufus structured his diatribes around the four principal virtues.<sup>39</sup>

As we saw in chapters 1 and 2, a version of this set of virtues was ascribed to Augustus, engraved upon his golden shield of virtues (*clupeus virtutum*) and recounted in his *Res gestae*. And in chapter 5, I discussed how Philo's appropriation of these virtues, among which he includes piety, served his broader aims of representing Jewish obedience to the God of Israel as encompassing the very goal of philosophical training (ἄσκησις), namely the blessed and happy life marked by perfected virtue and contemplation of the divine. Could the Pastoral Epistles' reference to these virtues serve a similar purpose?

While 1 Timothy 6:11 includes the virtues of justice (δικαιοσύνη) and piety (εὐσέβεια) among its list of exhorted virtues,<sup>40</sup> the closest reference to the principle philosophical virtues is Titus 2:11–12. The passage reads:

Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ σωτήρος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις παιδεύουσα  
ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας  
σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people, educating (παιδεύουσα) us, so that we might live with moderation (σωφρόνως), justice (δικαίως), and piety (εὐσεβῶς) in the present age, renouncing impiety (ἀσέβειαν) and earthly desires (κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας).

<sup>39</sup> See *Fragment 3* ("That Women Too Should Study Philosophy"); see A. C. van Geytenbeek, *Musonius Rufus and Greek Diatribe*, *Wijsgerige Teksten en Studies* 8 (Assen: van Gorcum, 1962), 25–28, 51–53.

<sup>40</sup> Within the field of philosophy, the virtues of justice and piety have their own legacy of being referenced together. See esp. Plato, *Gorg.* 507B; *Euthyphr.* 12E; and *Prot.* 331AB, where Socrates discursively binds the two: "Justice is pious, and piety is just (καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην ὅσιον εἶναι καὶ τὴν ὁσιότητα δίκαιον)." As Raymond Collins notes that his pairing was well received in Hellenistic Jewish literature (1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, 124). Collins gives the following examples from Philo, *Prob.* 83–84; *Spec.* 2.63; and esp. *Abr.* 208: "For it belongs to the same nature, to be pious (εὐσεβῆς) and humane (φιλάνθρωπον), and both holiness (ὁσιότης) to God and justice (δικαιοσύνη) to people are observed in the same nature."

Except for its lack of courage (ἀνδρεία), this list of virtues is identical to the set of four cardinal virtues found in Dionysius of Halicarnassus and 4 Maccabees.<sup>41</sup>

Stephen Mott has persuasively demonstrated that Titus' list of virtues does in fact signal the cardinal virtues of philosophy, giving numerous examples where only three of the four principle virtues are given.<sup>42</sup> In fact, a near-perfect match to Titus can be found in Isocrates's speech, *On Peace* 63, in which he lists three principal virtues, including piety (εὐσέβεια), moderation (σωφροσύνη), and justice (δικαιοσύνη) as summing up all virtue. In fourteen cases where Philo lists three cardinal virtues, just like in Titus 2:12, courage (ἀνδρεία) is absent.<sup>43</sup>

According to Mott, Titus 2:11–12 has re-described Christian salvation to encompass a traditional philosophical understanding of conversion as a life redirected from vice to virtue.<sup>44</sup> Through παιδεία, the grace of God has delivered all

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<sup>41</sup> See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 1.3.5; 4 Macc 5:22–24. The parallels between 4 Macc 5:22–24 and Titus 2:11–12 are noteworthy: “You scoff at our philosophy as though living by it were irrational, but it teaches (ἐκδιδάσκει) us self-control (σωφροσύνη), so that (ὥστε) we master all pleasures and desires (ἐπιθυμιῶν), and it also trains us in courage, so that we endure any suffering willingly; it instructs (παιδεύει) us in justice (δικαιοσύνη), so that in all our dealings we act impartially, and it teaches us piety (εὐσέβειαν), so that with proper reverence we worship (σέβειν) the only living God” (4 Macc 4:22–24; NRSV). Cf. Mary D’Angelo’s helpful chart comparing the traditional Platonic tetrad of virtues, Augustus’s virtues, Dionysius and 4 Maccabees, and Tit 2:12 in “Εὐσέβεια,” 158. Cf. Philo, *Det.* 72, quoted above.

<sup>42</sup> Mott, “Greek Ethics,” 22–48, esp. 25–29. See Plato, *Meno* 78D; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 23.7 (cf. 23.8); Plutarch, *Max. princ.* 776D; Justin, *Dial.* 8; Lucian, *Somnium* 10.

<sup>43</sup> Philo *Det.* 157; *Post.* 93; *Mig.* 219; *Cong.* 2; *Leg. All.* 2.18; *Mut.* 50; *Quis Her.* 245; *Som.* 2.266; *Jos.* 153; and *Praem.* 159. Although ἀνδρεία is present in *Op.* 79; *Mut.* 225; *Quod Deus* 170.

<sup>44</sup> On the topics of παιδεία, the passions, and moral progress within Ancient Mediterranean culture, see the instructive essays found in Werner Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1961); John T. Fitzgerald, ed., *Passions and Moral Progress in Greco-Roman Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2008); also, Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*. On the topic of conversion within the field of philosophy, see Arthur Darby Nock’s classic, *Conversion*. On the convergence of these themes in Titus, see Abraham Malherbe, “Christ Jesus Came into the World to

people from the clutches of vice and brought them into a life of virtue.<sup>45</sup> Titus 3:3–7 further develops this theme, juxtaposing a life of enslavement to various desires and pleasures (δουλεύοντες ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ ἡδοναῖς ποικίλαις) with a traditional hymn celebrating the salvation wrought by the appearance of the grace and philanthropy of the savior God.<sup>46</sup> Philosophical moralists since Plato have understood the goal of education (παιδεία) to be to direct people toward virtue and the knowledge of the good, leading them away from such vices as pleasure (ἡδονή), desire (ἐπιθυμία), and passion (πάθος).<sup>47</sup> While among the undisputed Pauline epistles and the Septuagint the verb παιδεύω means “to discipline through punishment,” in Titus 2:12, as Dibelius, Conzelmann, and Spicq have observed, παιδεύω signifies the traditional Hellenic sense of “to educate, train.”<sup>48</sup> Mott argues that Philo’s characterization of παιδεία as the “healthy and delivering” (ὕγιεινὸν μὲν καὶ σωτήριον; *Ebr.* 141) means by which one arrives at the cardinal virtues from their

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Save Sinners’: Soteriology in the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*; ed. Jan G. van der Watt; NovTSup 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 332–58.

<sup>45</sup> Benjamin Fiore notes that the Pastoral Epistles are unique among New Testament literature “in proposing a cognitive notion of salvation akin to that of the Greek moral philosophers” (*Pastoral Epistles*, 14). “Of course,” he adds differ from the Greek moralists in that the cognitive element derives from apostolic tradition and Scripture (2 Tim. 3:14–17; Titus 1:9; see 1 Tim. 6:3) and not simply human reason (*ibid.*, 14).

<sup>46</sup> On the imperial undertones of Titus’ praise of the philanthropic attributes of his Savior God, see chapter 2.

<sup>47</sup> For example, see Plato, *Leg.* 653B; see also Dio Chrysostom *Or.* 13.31–32; 32.15–16; Plutarch, *Adul. poet. aud.* 43C; Lucian, *Somn.* 10. Cf. Mott, “Greek Ethics,” 30–35.

<sup>48</sup> Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 142–43; Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.637. Cf. 1 Tim 1:20 and 2 Tim 2:25 where the term could be taken in the traditional Pauline sense of “correction through punishment.” However, 2 Tim 2:25, may very well signal a Greek meaning in its connection with “justice” (δικαιοσύνη).

corresponding vices most closely parallels the sense of παιδεία in Titus 2:11–12.<sup>49</sup>

Mott's argument undergirds my contention that the Pastoral Epistles engages with philosophical conceptions and terminology. However, Mott stops short of describing the rhetorical effect of either authors' appropriation of such philosophical concepts and topics.

### **The Pastorals' Paul as a Possessing Philosophical Expertise in Piety**

Individually, each of these parallels between the Pastoral Epistles and philosophical literature might amount to some coincidental cultural resonance. Among commentators, these parallels have often been studied for how they inform our translation of a given term or how the term has developed as a result of its appropriation within Christian literature. Taken together, however, the cumulative effect of identifying these cultural resonances points to a more grand rhetorical strategy at work within the Pastoral Epistles and particularly within 1 Timothy 3:16. Given the evidence that the Pastoral Epistles were deeply familiar with the terms and concepts of moral philosophy, it becomes all the more probable that we should read the constellation of piety and mystery terminology found in 1 Timothy 3:16 as also trading upon a common philosophic trope, as evidenced in Philo and Plutarch. The Pastorals' use of philosophical terminology and tropes was not only useful for communicating its vision of human flourishing in terminology recognizable to outsiders, but it also capitalized upon the cultural prestige associated with

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<sup>49</sup> Mott, "Greek Ethics," 33–35. On the role of παιδεία in bringing people to virtue in Philo, see *Sacr.* 63; *Leg.* 2.89; 3.140; *QG* 4.226; *Agr.* 44; *Det.* 16; *Ebr.* 153.

philosophic expertise, showing the inscribed author to be precisely the type of authorial voice who can and ought to teach about matters including the virtue and the nature of the divine.

As we have seen throughout this study, the inscribed conflict between the author and his opponents entailed contrasting understandings of piety. The inscribed opponents are depicted as possessing a form of piety (μόρφωσιν εὐσεβείας) (2 Tim 3:5), from which they seek a profit from patrons who might support their teachings (1 Tim 6:5).<sup>50</sup> The “profane babbling” (βέβηλοι κενοφωνίαι) of the opponents’ theoretical speculations on divine matters produces “impiety” (ἀσέβεια) that threatens to spread like “gangrene” (γάγγραινα) (2 Tim 2:16–17). It is impossible to know whether the author adopts the terminology of piety because it was a term actively shared and contested among his actual opponents or introduced by the author himself as further rhetorical ammunition against his opponents’ claims. Overall, the inscribed author’s strategic deployment of piety, including “the mystery of piety,” aims to legitimate his own position over against rival teachers, whom he disparages as lacking any moral, behavioral, and intellectual integrity.

The author’s use of philosophical concepts and tropes in order to add legitimacy to his conception of the ideal *ekklesiā* in competition with other rival positions complements his appropriation of the authorial voice of the apostle Paul. The Pastorals’ Paul emphasizes that God has entrusted him with “a deposit” (παραθήκη) consisting of the “glorious Gospel” (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης; 1 Tim

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<sup>50</sup> See chapter 2.

1:11), which Timothy must guard (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14) and entrust to faithful people (2 Tim 2:2).<sup>51</sup> By drawing a direct line of succession between the transmission of correct teaching from God, to Paul, to Timothy, and to later followers which presumably includes those Christians who abide by the author's theology, the author of the Pastoral Epistles represents rival views as standing outside the bounds of the apostolic tradition. In contrast to the apostolic legacy of Paul, the opponents are associated with the shipwrecked faith of Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom Paul has turned over to Satan on account of their blasphemy (1 Tim 1:19–20).<sup>52</sup> While the author's claims to piety rest upon apostolic tradition, those of his opponents have a disreputable ancestry. As Geoffrey S. Smith observes, by locating the deviant doctrine he opposes in the apostolic past, the author is able to condemn the opponents' teaching with "the authority of an apostle," as well as "demonstrate to those with 'itching ears' who may entertain the teachings of his rivals that this path is well trodden and leads to sinfulness, unsound teaching, and ultimately, apostasy."<sup>53</sup>

And so, the author's appropriation of terms and concepts from the cultural domain of moral philosophy functioned to legitimate the author's expertise on moral and theological issues before audiences familiar with the various

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<sup>51</sup> See also 2 Tim 1:12, Titus 1:3.

<sup>52</sup> See also, 2 Tim 2:17–18, where the author accuses Hymenaeus and Philetus with the impious claim that the resurrection has already taken place—a belief possibly held by the author's contemporary opponents.

<sup>53</sup> Smith, *Guilt by Association*, 42. Smith goes on to make the important argument that "by implying that present-day heretics have ancestors, the author of the Pastoral Epistles introduced a pedagogical approach to heresy that made possible the more elaborate genealogical schemes of classification preferred by later cataloguers" (ibid., 42).



philosophers that occupied their civic space and who were competing for the public's attention and patronage.<sup>54</sup> Sympathetic audiences of the Pastoral Epistles could be encouraged that their faith lacked nothing of what was esteemed within the domain of philosophical expertise. Additionally, such audiences were encouraged to be on the look-out for “sophists” in their midst. Whoever the Pastorals' inscribed opponents were intended to represent within the historical-rhetorical situation of the pseudepigrapher, these (and any other such) rival teachers were now in danger of being labeled as “outsiders.” And so, the author of the Pastorals sought to build solidarity around what he considered to be the true teachings in accordance with the “mystery of piety” by demarcating insiders who held rival teaching and practices as outsiders.

#### **THE PASTORALS' PAUL AMONG THE MYSTERIES OF ARTEMIS OF EPHEBUS**

We might also further contextualize the Pastoral Epistles' “mystery of piety” among the claims to piety made by cult officiates of the mysteries of Artemis in Ephesus. Some scholars have already observed the resonance between the assertion, “great is the mystery of piety” (μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον; 1 Tim 3:16), and the cheer associated with the celebration of the Ephesian Artemis as recorded in Acts 19:28 and 34: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians” (μεγάλη ἡ

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<sup>54</sup> See Dio Chrysostom *Alex.* 32.9, whose vitriolic description of Cynics provides just such an image of philosophers competing with one another in the public domain: “And as for the Cynics, as they are called, it is true that the city contains no small number of that sect, and that, like any other thing, this too has had its crop — persons whose tenets, to be sure, comprise practically nothing spurious or ignoble, yet who must make a living — still these Cynics, posting themselves at street-corners, in alley-ways, and at temple-gates, pass round the hat and play upon the credulity of lads and sailors and crowds of that sort, stringing together rough jokes and much tittle-tattle and that low badinage that smacks of the market-place” (Crosby, LCL).

Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων).<sup>55</sup> Even more striking is the self-representation of the Kouretes, officers within the Artemis cult who held symposia and performed “mystic sacrifices” (μυστικὰς θυσίας) at Artemis’s sacred birthplace in nearby Ortygia.<sup>56</sup> These youths prominently portrayed themselves as εὐσεβεῖς upon the capitals of the stoa belonging to the *prytaneion* in Ephesus.<sup>57</sup> As Guy MacLean Rogers notes, εὐσεβεῖς and εὐσέβεια were used to describe sacred officials and initiates (μύσται εὐσεβεῖς) who participated within the sacred mysteries of Demeter Karpophoros in Smyrna and the Great Samothracian gods.<sup>58</sup> Such claims to piety prominent among the proclamation, sacred practice, and public promotion of Kouretes and the cult of Artemis resonate with the presentation of the Christological encomium of 1 Timothy 3:16 and raise questions as to whether early audiences of the Pastorals or even the author himself were attuned to this discursive frequency. When the author of Pastorals incorporated allusions to the mysteries within his rhetorical presentation of the contents of his faith, was he implicitly contesting the claims to piety and to knowledge of the divine as espoused by local priests of the cult of Ephesian Artemis?

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<sup>55</sup> See Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.492; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (BNTC; London: A & C Black, 1963), 89; Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 246–47. Witherington references Xenophon of Ephesus, *The Ephesian Tale* 1.11.5 which also stresses the greatness of Artemis (τὴν μεγάλην Ἐφεσίων Ἄρτεμιν), and thus lends credibility to the historicity behind such a cry as recorded in Acts.

<sup>56</sup> Strabo, *Geogr.* 14.1.20.

<sup>57</sup> See *IvE* IV, 1001–2, 1004–6, 1008–9, 1012–18, 1020–24, 1028–30, 1032–37, 1040–42, 1044, 1047–48, 1050–51, 1053; also Rogers, *Mysteries of Artemis*, 134–5. See also Towner (*Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 172) who also notes the resonance between the εὐσεβεῖς Kouretes and the language of 1 Timothy.

<sup>58</sup> See Rogers, *Mysteries*, 134, who cites *IvS* II, 1.653, 654 as his example of priestess of Demeter being memorialized for “piety toward the goddess” and for preparing the feast for the initiates. For Samothracian evidence, he cites Susan Guettel Cole’s article, “The Mysteries of Samothrace during the Roman Period,” *ANRW* 18.2 (1989): 1564–98, esp. 1578.

Would the author's claim about the greatness of the *ekklēsia*'s mystery of piety have been understood as an (in)direct challenge to the pious Kouretes' cry "Great is the Artemis of the Ephesians"?<sup>59</sup> Indeed, as Daniel Fayer-Griggs argues, the historical Paul himself may have contended with the local cult officers and devotees of Artemis, whom he satirically refers to as "beasts," punning upon Artemis's reputation for being the "mistress of wild beasts" (πότνια θηρῶν).<sup>60</sup> That the author of the Pastoral Epistles would have "Paul" again challenge the cult of Artemis is not an unreasonable proposal.

I also wonder whether some audiences may have even heard a resonance between the presentation of the hymnic encomium of Christ's manifestation and glorified ascent preserved by the *ekklēsia* as a "mystery of piety" and the sacred lore (τὸν ἱερὸν λόγον) preserved by the cults dedicated to Isis, Demeter, Bacchus, or Artemis. More concretely, is it possible that Ephesian audiences familiar with the sacred lore (ἱερὸς λόγος) of Artemis as celebrated in paeans sung by the priests and cult attendants in their festive processions throughout Ephesus would have heard 1 Timothy 3:16 as presenting a competitive alternative?<sup>61</sup> Might the author's

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<sup>59</sup> So Spicq, *Épîtres Pastorales*, 1.492: "In Ephesus, the [church] shines the *doxa* of the resurrected Christ...and gains victory over the cult of Artemis...In the hearts of converts, authentic piety is a substitute for the statue of *Eusebeia* erected in the theater of Ephesus [see chapter 3], for the scrupulous practice of the rites of pagan mysteries, for the *synedrion* of the Κούρετες εὐσεβεῖς" [A Éphèse, elle fait resplendir la *doxa* du Christ ressuscité...et remporte la victoire sur le culte d'Artémis...L'authentique piété s'est substituée dans le cœur des convertis à la statue de l'*Eusébeia* érigée au théâtre d'Ephèse, à la scrupuleuse pratique des rites des mystères païens, au *synedrion* des Κούρετες εὐσεβεῖς].

<sup>60</sup> Daniel Frayer-Griggs, "The Beasts at Ephesus and the Cult of Artemis," *HTR* (2013): 459–77.

<sup>61</sup> On the processional route of the mysteries of Artemis, see Rogers, *Mysteries*, 135–43; on the procession of Salutaris's statues, see Rogers, *Sacred Identity*, 80–126. It is interesting to note that 1 Timothy 3:16's encomium that encompasses the story of Christ's arrival upon the earth, the declaration of his reign, and his glorious return to the heavens loosely shares some thematic links to

introduction of an encomium celebrating the manifestation and ascension of Christ as a great “mystery of piety” be interpreted as an attempt by the author to lay claim to the prestige associated with the ritual expertise associated with the cultic priests and attendants of Artemis? As Dan Ullucci has observed, it was common for philosophers to encroach upon the expertise of local priests and mystagogues by denigrating their practices as parochial and lacking a universal, philosophical scope of meaning.<sup>62</sup> As we saw in chapter 5, this rhetorical tactic was deployed by Plutarch in his attempt to distinguish his understanding of the divine from competing interpretations held by priests of Isis. In this case, however, the author of the Pastorals could be interpreted as making the claim that the spiritual knowledge and benefits that he proffers rivals those associated with the priests and cult attendants of the Ephesian Artemis. However intriguing this line of creative historical imagination might be, it must remain in the domain of speculation given the limited nature of our extant evidence regarding the processional celebration of the mysteries of Artemis or of early Christian responses to such ritual practices.

## CONCLUSION

The question, “What is piety?” has been shown to have been compelling for Philo and Plutarch, as it was for many philosophically minded inquirers before them beginning as early as Plato. Each of their cases for piety had to be carefully presented given their positions’ inherently critical stance against other competing

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the kind of stories shared about Osiris’s appearance, death, return, and reign as documented Plutarch’s account, *On Isis and Osiris*.

<sup>62</sup> See Ch. 5.

schools of philosophy and prevailing opinions about the divine. For those authors whose understandings of the divine were less socially acceptable by the masses than others, there was much at stake in the persuasiveness of these texts pertaining to legitimating or elevating the social perception of their school of thought.

Although many scholars stress the “central place of the Christ-event within *eusebeia*”<sup>63</sup> as the virtue’s “soteriological foundation,”<sup>64</sup> a thorough examination of the broader rhetorical nuances inherent within the Pastoral Epistles’ rhetoric of piety illuminates its implications within a cultural milieu where the term was widely traded upon and contested. What I hope to have shown in this discussion is that the author’s rhetorical construction of piety as a mystery revealed in a Christological summary was representative of a subtle, but potent polemic against his inscribed opponents. While the precise identity of these opponents remains opaque, it seems clear enough that there existed some historical-rhetorical situation where the author thought it was tactically advantageous to deploy a rhetoric of piety, alongside philosophical tropes and terminology, in order to distinguish his teachings from rival competitors<sup>65</sup> and possibly other religious experts, including the pious Kouretes of the Ephesian Artemis.

In a world where piety carried cultural prestige and the labeling of others as impious was used to denigrate a person or group, much was at stake in how one was perceived. For groups like the philosophical schools, Hellenistic Jews living in

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<sup>63</sup> Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 151.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>65</sup> For my own imaginative reconstruction of the opponents, see n. 32 above.

Alexandria, and Christ followers of the Pastoral Epistles, who all contrasted their views about the divine with the general populace's views, it was critical for such texts to train their audiences in how to persuasively articulate and defend their beliefs as pious and respectable. The adoption of philosophical language may have functioned as another tactic of the Pastorals' apologetic negotiation of its socio-political situation.

This analysis helps us to understand better how the elements of piety, mystery, and the encomium to Christ may have conceptually cohered within the cultural discourses shared by the author and audiences of this text. The author's depiction of the Christological summary as a mystery may have signaled a polemical claim to the cultural expertise ascribed to mystagogues and initiates of mysteries, like the Kouretes of the Ephesian Artemis, who also claimed to possess piety and true knowledge about the divine. The term *μυστήριον* does not just simply refer to God's disclosure of his previously veiled plan as some have exegetically argued by interpreting this term within the confines of the New Testament canon. Rather, the term held a rich range of signification within Greek philosophy where the language of mysteries were marshaled to enhance the credibility of claims to piety under the assumption that mysteries were repositories of ancient wisdom.

What I ultimately want to suggest is that among the manifold explicit, implied, and even unintentional tropes and rhetorical strategies of persuasion employed by the author of the Pastorals, the portrayal of the Christian faith as a pious mystery *par excellence* was deployed in a manner that would have been recognizable and perhaps compelling to audiences familiar with such popular

philosophical and cultural tropes. The cultural prestige that was widely associated with the expertise of philosophers and mystagogues regarding ancient wisdom, according to the Pastorals, fall under the auspices of the *ekklēsia*, which stands as the standard and bulwark of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). And so, the author seeks to steer his audience away from other “sophistic” teachings and practices that may claim to be pious, but in fact threaten to disrupt the divinely established social order of the *ekklēsia*. By framing false teachers as impious sophists, the author not only denigrates the teachings and practices of rivals, but he also trains his audience to perceive such false teachers and their supporters as outsiders of the community. And with the ideal *ekklēsia* rid of such heterodox teachings and ascetic practices, it is the author’s aim for his audience to remain confident in the legitimacy of the *ekklēsia*’s claims to piety and truth.

## Conclusion

### *Pious Christian Subjects of the Roman Empire*

In this dissertation, I have sought to show how the Pastoral Epistles' claims to piety were informed by and evoked contemporaneous appeals to *pietas* and εὐσέβεια operative in intersecting imperial, civic, and philosophical cultural domains. In my emphasis upon the *rhetoric* of piety, I signaled my aim to read the Pastorals alongside contemporaneous imperial propaganda, honorary inscriptions, and philosophical writings to determine not simply what piety *meant*, but how appeals to piety advanced socio-political aims and reinforced cultural values and ideological assumptions. Coins celebrating the *pietas* of the imperial households of Trajan and Hadrian, the monumental inscription of Salutaris in Ephesus, and the writings of Philo and Plutarch provide evidence that claims to piety rhetorically functioned to naturalize hierarchies of power and social orders, recognize the honorable status of citizens and subjects, authorize claims to knowledge about the divine, and delineate insiders from outsiders. Such strategic tactics aimed at legitimating and reinforcing social and political authority were made possible by the cultural currency and prestige which claims to piety carried—a prestige which is suggested by the prevalence of appeals to piety in cultural domains that communicated imperial power, civic status, and philosophical expertise. Reading the Pastorals among analogous cultural uses of piety allows us to appreciate the polyphonic resonances of the Pastorals' rhetoric of piety. These resonances, in turn,



attune our modern ears to hear the cultural significance and polemic that attended the Pastorals' appeal to piety, which ancient audiences would have recognized. Although our untrained ears have been deaf to such tones given modern assumptions about the relative triteness of claims to piety in "religious" texts, the analysis given here helps us to hear how the author of the Pastorals strategically may have deployed piety in negotiating prejudicial perceptions of Christians, perhaps as promulgators of a foreign and seditious *superstitio*, his intervention in Christian debates over the status and authority of benefactors in the *ekklēsia*, his attempt to build confidence in and solidarity around the legitimacy of his vision of the ideal *ekklēsia* over against competing interpretations of the Pauline tradition, and differentiate truly pious believers from "heterodox" outsiders. What is at stake for the author's claim to piety lies not only in the shape of the ecclesiology and theology of the ideal *ekklēsia*, but in the viability of this *ekklēsia* to navigate its existence within the Roman Empire until the return of Christ.

One of the central rhetorical effects of the Pastoral Epistles' appeal to piety was to evoke widespread cultural values about what constituted an ideal participant within the imperial, civic, and social orders. In some ways, this dissertation substantiates and vindicates Martin Dibelius's insightful observation that the Pastoral Epistles' use of εὐσεβεία is characteristic of its "Christianization" of the ideals of "good, honorable citizenship."<sup>1</sup> While a number of commentators would rightly critique Dibelius (and Conzelmann) for over-determining the meaning of piety within the domain of Greek ideals of citizenship, these scholars' emphasis

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<sup>1</sup> Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 39.

upon the influence of the Hellenistic Jewish background on the Pastoral Epistles tended to lose sight of the social and political application of Dibelius's initial insight. When considering the strategic aims and effects of the Pastoral Epistles' rhetoric of piety, it is less important to determine the primary *source* of influence, than it is to account for the multiple cultural domains, ideals, and assumptions of the Pastoral Epistles' and their audiences' cultural milieux. One of the essential aims of the Pastorals' portrayal of the *ekklēsia* as exemplifying civic virtues was to encourage its audience to consider themselves as honorable participants in society despite popular suspicions about their involvement in a dishonorable, foreign, and seditious superstition.

The author of the Pastorals also aligns his vision of an ideal *ekklēsia* with the societal values of the Roman Empire by admonishing women to embody virtues associated with the ideal Roman matron, which included *pietas*. The association of *pietas* as befitting the ideal Roman woman had acquired a heightened cultural significance in the circulation of numerous coins commemorating the *pietas* of the women of the imperial households of Trajan and Hadrian. Piety (θεοσέβεια) in 1 Timothy 2:9–15 functions to encapsulate and naturalize the patriarchal ideals of femininity, including modesty in dress, submission before men, and childbearing, which the Pastorals' female audiences are instructed to practice. These ideals, along with 1 Timothy's encouragement of widows to remarry and bear children as they are able (1 Tim. 5:14), also aligns with the spirit of Augustus's marriage reforms which conceptualized the ideal Roman matron as excelling in modesty (*pudicitia*) and child rearing. I suggested that the author's promotion of the ideal Christian

women as excelling in piety, moderation (σωφροσύνη), and bearing children respond to prevalent suspicions that Christians, like other stereotypical foreign superstitions, were composed of gullible and promiscuous women. The author the Pastorals seeks to persuade his audiences to behave in such a way that disrupts such women.

The author's admonition toward women to lead lives befitting of piety (1 Tim. 2:10) overlaps with its concern to circumscribe the authority and influence of wealthy patrons. Not only does the author prohibit all women, including both those who are wealthy and those who are not, from teaching men (1 Tim. 2:12), he also seeks to discourage both male and female benefactors from providing financial assistance to those "who teach differently" than teachings that are in accordance with piety (1 Tim. 6:3). Thus, the author attempts to broker power relationships between wealthy benefactors and the *ekklēsia*, by locating the authority and expertise to discern what constitutes true piety within a chain of succession comprised of those who have reliably transmitted the sound teachings in accordance with piety. I suggested that the author deploys this lineage of piety to intervene in the ideological assumptions of wealthy benefactors, who believed that their patronage of the *ekklēsia* afforded them honor, influence, and authority in Christian communities. Although the author does not prohibit benefactors from becoming leaders, his lineage of piety at least serves to bring such wealthy members into conformity with his social and theological vision.

The Pastoral Epistles' polemical construction of piety also evoked the contentious discourses on piety found within philosophical literature. The topic of

what constituted true piety was widely debated among philosophical circles and even became a defining issue of difference between philosophical schools for some Epicureans and Stoics during the periods of the late Republic and early Empire. Of particular interest to this study, was how both Philo and Plutarch not only deployed a rhetoric of piety in order to authorize their respective understandings about the divine, but also turned to the language and interpretation of Greek and Egyptian mysteries to add further legitimacy to their views. Philo's description of the practice of (Jewish) philosophy as an initiation into the mysteries and Plutarch's allegorical reading of the sacred stories and rites of mysteries operate under the same cultural assumption that mysteries were repositories of ancient wisdom. Moreover, both treatments of the mysteries constitute rhetorical tactics that sought to appropriate the prestige ascribed to the expertise of mystagogues and other priests of the mysteries. I suggested that the author of 1 Timothy's introduction of a Christological summary as a mystery of piety could be interpreted as deploying a similar rhetorical tactic in order to legitimate its claim to knowledge about the divine.

The author's proclamation of its possession of a "great mystery of piety" (1 Tim. 3:16) may have signaled to audiences that the cultural prestige widely associated with the expertise of philosophers and mystagogues regarding ancient wisdom are the "inheritance" of the *ekklēsia*, which stands as the measure of every truth claim made by competing religious experts (1 Tim. 3:15).<sup>2</sup> Similar to Philo's

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<sup>2</sup> I also wonder whether it is possible to interpret the Pastoral Epistles' joint rhetorical tactics of demonstrating its expertise in philosophical matters and deployment of piety as also offering a response to philosophical assessments of Christians as "impious" (ἀσεβείς). In his *2 Apology*, Justin is concerned to undermine the accusations of a certain Cynic philosopher in Rome named Crescens who, apparently, has been quite persuasive in persuading audiences that Christians are atheists and

and Plutarch's deployment of piety, the Pastorals' rhetoric of piety functioned to differentiate further its teachings from other competing interpretations which are polemically portrayed as lacking (1 Tim. 4:7–8; 1 Tim. 6:3) or possessing a counterfeit version of piety (1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Tim. 3:5). Additionally, I suggested that 1 Timothy's claim upon the "mystery of piety" could even be interpreted as offering a challenge to contemporary claims about the greatness of Artemis made by ancient Ephesians and about the piety of the Kouretes who officiated over the goddess' mysteries.

As I discussed in the introduction, categories of resistance or accommodation prove unhelpful for conceptualizing the multiple positions the Pastoral Epistles occupy in relation to its imperial situation. On the one hand, the author of the Pastorals admonish Christians to pray on behalf of the emperor and other imperial authorities as well as emphasizes the ways in which its members ought to embody the so-called cardinal philosophical virtues and ideals of the Roman matron. On the other hand, the Pastorals remind their audiences that there is only one God and Savior and one mediator, Jesus Christ, to whom all reverence is due (1 Tim. 2:3–7). Furthermore, the author in 2 Timothy reminds audiences about the risks of practicing their piety in his depiction of Paul in chains and awaiting his fate within a Roman prison (2 Tim. 2:9; 4:6). Indeed, 1 Timothy asks audiences to remember the faithful witness Jesus bore to imperial power (1 Tim. 6:13), that challenges readers

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impious (ἀθέων καὶ ἀσεβῶν) (2 *Apol.* 3). Athenagoras, too, speaks about the reputation Christians had for "practicing impiety" (ἀσεβεῖν) (*Leg.* 1, 4, 14, 15). However, it is difficult to know to what extent the critique of Christians as impious was associated with philosophical critiques of Christianity in the early second-century C.E.

to remain faithful to the sound teachings no matter what they face. There is a palpable tension of compliance and resistance maintained in these Epistles that need not be resolved solely to one pole or the other.

However, where such language of negotiation becomes especially helpful is its ability to intervene in the expressed concerns of such scholars as Witherington and Towner who want to ensure that we do not read the Pastoral Epistles' use of such terminology like εὐσέβεια as representing a banal capitulation or accommodation to the pressures to conform to the dominant imperial culture.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that the specter of Dibelius's "ideal of Christian citizenship" haunts the concerns of Witherington and Towner. I hope to have shown that the Pastoral Epistles can read as richly engaging with the ideas and assumptions of its cultural milieu that cannot be reduced to either a "banal" accommodation or heroic resistance against imperial power. Rather, one of the strategic aims of the Pastoral Epistles' use of language like εὐσέβεια is so that outsiders who encounter Christians using such terminology might recognize something familiar and respectable about the Christian way of life and so have their prejudices disrupted. Studies that emphasize the "Christianization" of piety fail to attend to the ways in which early Christians may have benefited from their Greek and Roman neighbors (mis-)recognizing the Christian claims to piety as retaining the same respectability and prestige as other cultural claims to piety.

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<sup>3</sup> See Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1–2 Timothy*, 150; Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 389.

It is my hope that this dissertation and its task of tracing the rhetorical operation of claims to piety along with it attending prestige within the cultural milieux of the Pastoral Epistles opens fresh perspectives about the reception of the Pastorals and the possible socio-political implications of its language. It has not been my intention to dismiss the importance of the theological *meaning* of piety for the Pastoral Epistles in place of the socio-political dimensions of claims to piety. Rather I understand the categories of theological, sociological, and political as intersecting and dialectally affecting one another when it comes to understanding the use of piety within its ancient Mediterranean context. In effect, we can only arrive at a robust understanding about what piety *meant* for the Pastorals' early Christian audiences by attending to what piety *does* within the epistles and within the cacophony of discourses about piety that pervaded their encounters with imperial power, civic benefaction, and popular philosophy. By refocusing our scope of analysis away from questions about the Pastorals' primary source of influence to attend to the various rhetorical functions of piety available to early Christians, we enrich our historical imaginations about the possible strategies deployed by early Christians in their negotiation of social and political struggles which characterized their attempts to articulate and embody an ideal Christian *ekklēsia* within the Roman Empire. For early Christians then, claims to piety meant a great deal more than modern categories of "religion" or "theology" allow us to apprehend. Piety constituted a "great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6) that carried social and political power.

## Abbreviations

<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i>
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>BDAG</i>	Frederick William Danker, Walter Bauer, et. al. rev. ed. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000
<i>BMCRE</i>	<i>Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum</i> . London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1923–
<i>CH</i>	<i>Church History</i>
<i>EQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>IEph</i>	<i>Die Inschriften von Ephesos</i> . 8 vols. Bonn: Habelt, 1979–84
<i>ILS</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> , ed. Hermann Dessau. Berlin: Weidmann, 1892–1916
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>LNTS</i>	Library of New Testament Studies
<i>NewDocs</i>	<i>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</i> . Edited by Greg H. R. Horsley and Stephen Llewelyn. North Ryde, N.S.W.: The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University, 1981–
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>OGIS</i>	Wilhelm Dittenberger, ed. <i>Orientalis Graecae Inscriptiones Selectae</i> . 2 vols. Hildesheim: Olms, 1960
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> . Edited by Theodor Klauser et al. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1950–
<i>RIC</i>	<i>Roman Imperial Coinage</i> . London: Spink and Son, 1923–
<i>RIDS</i>	<i>Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité</i>
<i>SPhiloA</i>	<i>Studia Philonica Annual</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
<i>SVF</i>	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> . Hans Friedrich August von Arnim. 4 vols. Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–1924.
<i>THKNT</i>	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>



## Abbreviations

<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>

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